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rooted fear of the unknown. Spirits, ghosts, and "cunjuh" all powerfully influence their daily existence.

Young and middle-aged persons, reticent before strangers, appear dubious and suspicious. They profess great knowledge of conjure and superstitions, but they hasten to say that they "sho ain't gonuh tell nobody" what they know about these things. The old inhabitants, more loquacious, enjoy relating their beliefs and customs to a willing listener.

Among the older inhabitants is Aunt Mary,* the daughter of a slave, who remembers the days when rice fields lay east of the town and it was no unusual sight to find a big "'gatuh" caught in the rice canal. Early morning finds Aunt Mary hobbling to her work of scrubbing the entrances to stores. In going to and from work she always drags a broom behind her. When we asked the reason for this, she answered, "'Cuz uh dohn wants none uh deze fixuhs tuh git muh foot track, cuz den dey kin hanl yuh jis lak dey wants tuh."

"Do you really believe that, Aunt Mary? Do you believe in dreams and ghosts too?"

"I sho does belieb in dreams an ghoses. Ef uh hab suttn dreams, dey sho comes true. Tuh dream uh fresh poke some uh yuh kin folks gwine die; fresh beef mean duh det uh some wite pusson yuh knows well. Tuh dream uh a dead pusson is a sho sign uh rain, an anudduh sign uh rain is wen a suttn place on muh head itches."

The old woman switched her broom around under the other arm and continued, "As fuh ghoses, ain't uh got tuh belieb in um?" Wy, I kin see um muhsef. Yuh see, I wuz bawn wid a double caul obuh muh face an anybody knows dat a pusson bawn wid a caul obuh dey face kin sho see ghoses.[4] Deah's mo dan one kine uh ghos. Some come befo yuh natchul an pleasant; den some kin sho make yuh sked. I kin tell long fo anyting happen wen it gwine happen.

* *Mary Hunter, 548 East St. Julian Street.*

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754 wuz a fine lookin boy. Deah wuz so many women attuh him, lots uh people tink one uh dem fix im,[15] but duh doctuh say he die frum pneumonia.

763 825 "I knowd he wuz gwine die cuz I heahd a owl jis a hootin duh day befo.[44] Deah's udduh signs uh det too, sech as ef yuh sees a buzzud sailin roun duh elements, das a sho sign. Ef a rat eat yuh dress, yuh musn patch it yuhsef lessn yuh bun duh place fo yuh sew on it, cuz das a sign uh det. Dat happen right heah in dis house fo muh faduh die."

763 •775 She folded her hands in her lap and slowly rocked her chair as she continued. "Wen a pusson die in duh house, ef yuh take em out fo duh ministuh say a few wuds, den deah spirit will hant duh house,[36c] cuz dey jis caahn be happy till dey hab ebryting done propuh an right.[36] I hab heahd spirits roun dis house. Sometime dey call yuh. Wen dey call yuh, dey done come tuh hant yuh an git yuh tuh go weah dey is. Wen dey call, yuh mus say, 'I ain ready tuh go yit.' "

754 The old woman stopped rocking, sat upright, and removed the pipe from between her stained teeth. "An spirits ain all. Deah's witches. Wy, deah's a ole uhmun neah yuh wut people say is a witch wut rides folks.[69] We all leab uh lone. We shuts duh doe ef we sees uh comin. She come lak a nightmeah tuh duh folks wile dey sleepin. But ef yuh puts duh bruhm cross duh doe, yuh kin keep any witch out duh ruhm at night. Witches jis caahn cross obuh a bruhmstick."

[789] Another woman * was scornful about conjure. She tossed her head indignantly as she made known that most of her neighbors for blocks around, her friends, the members of her church, believed in the infallibility of the root worker.

"Wy," she said, "they all believe that everything that happen tuh anybody is cause by some root wukuh.[48] They don't leave anything fuh God tuh do. Ef anybody takes sick, yuh'll fine somebody theah sayin sumpm is wrong with yuh sickness, that somebody 'put down' sumpm fuh yuh. Ef

* *Katie McCarts, 744 Hull Street.*

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anybody dies roun heah, some root wukuh is responsible fuh the death.[15, 69b] Now, me, I don't believe people kin put sumpm unduh steps aw unduh yuh house that will hahm yuh. Some time ago my son, my only chile, wuz drownded. Well every time I tun roun some of my neighbuhs wuz tellin me my son's death wuzn't fair. They say 'somebody hoodood yuh chile an cause him tuh git drownded.' "

She hastened to add, however, that she did believe "fuh sho" in some signs and omens, concerning which she has been "plenty sperienced."

"Take fuh instance," she explained, "ef I staht out an have tuh tun back, I know it's bad luck less I makes a cross mahk an spits in it. I try tuh keep a woman frum bein the fust pusson tuh come tuh my house on Monday mawnin even ef I have tuh call in a man passin by. Fuh a woman tuh be yuh fust visituh on Monday mawnin means bad luck the balance of that week. I won't borruh aw len salt, fuh my mothuh alluz said it wuz bad luck. I believe in all the ole signs I ebuh heahd my parents talk bout. I wouldn't sweep trash out of the house aftuh dahk fuh anything cuz it'll sweep yuh luck away. Nevuh shake a tablecloth out duh doe aftuh dahk cause it means the death of yuh kin. Nevuh sew aw make a piece fuh a sick pusson aw that pusson will die.[49] An dreams, I sho do believe in em. Jis fo my son wuz drownded I suttnly have a dream that mean a death in the fambly."

The next person * we interviewed several blocks away expressed an absolute faith in the return of the dead in various shapes. This was a man, who spoke with great earnestness of two experiences he had undergone, one with spirits, the other with a witch. He, too, had been born with a caul.[4]

"Muh fus time tuh see a ghos wuz in a rainstawm. Me an muh brudduh wuz caught, so we run tuh a ole vacant house an soons we git inside, duh doe slam shut. We tought it wuz

* *S. B. Holmes, 716 East Perry Street.*

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duh win, but wen uh look roun deah wuz standin in duh cawnuh two men wid no head. I tought muh brudduh see em too. Wen duh rain stop, we lef. Muh brudduh didn say nuttn, so I say, 'Did you see dem mens in dat house?' He say, 'No, wut mens?' Wen I tole im, he tought I bin crazy. But lots uh time attuh dat I seen ghos." He folded his lips and nodded sagely.

"Now bout witches. Yuh know ghos an witches is diffunt. Witches is libin people an ghos is spirits uh duh dead. I know a ole uhmun ebrybody say wuz a witch. Well, bery soon she wuz ridin me.[69] I could eben see uh come. Duh winduh—it would go up, an den uh would begin tuh choke an smudduh till somebody wake me up. I git reel tin an po. Den cross duh street wuz a man wich wuz complainin bout his wife bein rid by a witch. It seem lak duh witch would ride me, den go obuh tuh his house. So he say he would trap uh. He stay up. When he heah his wife strugglin, he git a axe hanl an begin frailin roun in duh dahk till he hit sumpm. It let out a screech an a cat run out duh winduh an down duh paat. So duh nex mawnin duh man git his dog an put im on duh cat's trail.[68] Well, suh, bout half a mile down duh road in duh fence cawnuh wuz ole Malinda Edmonde wid tree rib broke. She beg im not tuh kill uh, but dat broke up duh witch ridin."

Further verification of the belief in the existence of spirits and witches was given us by Jack Wilson * who operates a small junk shop in the vicinity. We visited the elderly Negro in his residence and place of business, a small, queerly shaped shack that entirely blocks the narrow lane on which it stands. The lodging is hardly more than a shelter made by driving several long poles into the ground, suspending on these a frame-work of rope and wire, and piling on this foundation pieces of tin, iron, cardboard, and other junk. A small opening left at each end reveals on the inside no furni-

* *Jack Wilson, 272 McAlister Street.*

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347 ture, only some old pipes and pieces of scrap iron, heaps of
351 burlap sacks, and ragged clothes. Outside is a small vegetable garden, and clustered around the house in confusion are the odd automobile parts, lengths of pipe, parts of stoves, rags, and other miscellaneous items that make up the old man's stock in trade.

787 Wilson acknowledged a firm belief in the supernatural.
795 He told us, "I wuz bawn wid spiritual knowledge which gib me duh powuh tuh read duh mines uh people.[22a, e] I kin see people wut bin dead many yeahs. Duh dead know wut duh libin is doin an come roun deah close kin an friens wen dey is in trouble.[56] I kin speak tuh duh dead folk in song an dey kin unduhstan me.

"I kin see ghos mos any time. Dey seem lak natchul people. Duh way I know it's a ghos is cuz I kin nebuh ketch up wid um. Dey keep jis a suttn distance ahead uh me.

754 "Witches an cunjuh is jis groun wuk. Ef yuh keep way frum um dey sho caahn hut yuh. Some hab magic powuh wut come tuh um frum way back in Africa. Muh mothuh use tuh tell me bout slabes jis brung obuh frum Africa wut hab duh supreme magic powuh. Deah wuz a magic pass wud dat dey would pass tuh udduhs. Ef dey belieb in dis magic, dey could scape an fly back tuh Africa.[69a] I hab a uncle wut could wuk dis magic. He could disappeah lak duh win, jis walk off duh plantation an stay way fuh weeks at a time. One time he git cawnuhed by duh putrolmun an he jis walk up to a tree an he say, 'I tink I go intuh dis tree.' Den he disappeah right in duh tree."

124 These interviews, chosen at random from among the Old
[177 Fort Negroes, afford some small glimpse behind the scenes of this section's placid daily routine. They give significance
189] to the penny often seen nailed to the bone-white doorstep and help the outsider to understand the mojo ring or luck piece worn by almost every man, the silver dime tied around many a woman's ankle.[8, 12a, c, d]

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bush in somebody's yahd. They can't go out till you let them. You plant it in yuh own yahd. Nobody can get in to do you hahm. That's why I'm safe now. But," he concluded, with a melancholy look around his meagerly furnished domain, "I should've had it befo. My enemy has even prevented me from gettin on relief."

Lewis showed us his single treasured book, which he said contained magic art.*

"This book has helped me some," he said, "but I didn't really need it. I was birthed with my wisdom because I was the seventh child an bawn with a caul."[4]

We asked if he could see and talk with spirits.

"I see them," he said simply.[54, 55, 59] "Theah is a little ghos that stays right roun this house. The firs night I moved in heah he walked right in an jumped on me. I managed to throw him off. Now he comes every night. Sometimes he stands at the gate with his feet so high off the groun," measuring about a foot, "an his face is turned backwards,[57] but he can always see you. I don't talk to him any aw try to come close, because he would hahm me aw cause me to hahm myself. I jus pass him by as if he wasn't theah. But I see him.

"I know theah must be buried treasure wheah this house is built, fuh wheahevuh theah is money aw othuh treasure a ghos is put theah to gahd it.[61] One time I went out to Deptford with two othuh men to dig up a pot of money that I knew was buried theah. I saw three spirits, one man an two women. We dug and dug an finally we could see the pot of money. Jus then one of the women laughed, 'Ha! Ha! Ha!' The pot sunk down deepuh in the groun. We all ran.

"The laugh that spirit gave went right through me. I nevuh tried to dig up the money again. Right now I know

* *L. W. de Laurence, "The Book of Magical Art, Hindu Magic and East Indian Occultism." Chicago: The de Laurence Company, Twelfth Edition, Revised, 1914.*

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theah is treasure buried heah unduh me, but I wouldn't try to get it. It is bad luck. That spirit warned me.

"I see witches, too," he continued. "Not everybody can tell a witch, but I can. Theah's an old woman on Gwinnett Street with some cows. Othuh people don't know it, but she's the worse kind of witch. Not very long ago she came and rode a woman heah in Tin City and sucked uh blood.[69c] You ought to see that woman. She's so thin and weak she can't stand up."

"But isn't there some way to keep witches out?" we asked.

"Yes, you can lay a bruhmstick cross the doe befo night an they can't come in. A little salt is good. They don't take to salt." [69a]

Then he insisted on returning to the subject of his magic book. We evinced the proper interest and he showed us a strange recipe jotted down in almost illegible writing on the flyleaf of this book.

Eggs—2
carisin—1 pint
turpentine—1 pint
vinegar
cy pepper
table salt—1 box

"That's a cunjuh mixin," the old man explained. "I don't know what it's faw. It was in the book when Joe Fraser, a root doctuh,[48] gave it to me."

"Where is Joe Fraser?"

"He is dead these long yeahs. All the real old root doctuhs are passin on to the beyon." And Nathaniel Lewis sadly stroked his lame arm.

We left him standing in his garden and went on down the winding path. On each side, closed away behind their fences, stood the little houses of the town. One was made entirely of old signs; another was merely a battered automobile body

TIN CITY

342 with a rickety chimney sending up smoke from the roof.

From the doorway of one of the little tin houses, two heads peered out curiously at us. We stopped and talked for a 115 few minutes with Paul Singleton * and his wife.

The old man told us that he had been born during slavery times on a plantation near Darien. His master had owned about thirty-five plantations in the vicinity. He added that he had been brought to Savannah in 1869.

789 "Muh daddy use tuh tell me all duh time bout folks wut could fly back tuh Africa. Dey could take wing an jis fly off," he confided. "Lots uh time he tell me annudduh story 775 bout a slabe ship bout tuh be caught by revenoo boat. Duh slabe ship slip tru back ribbuh intuh creek. Deah wuz bout fifty slabes on bode. Duh slabe runnuhs tie rocks roun duh slabes' necks and tro um ovuhbode tuh drown. Dey say yuh kin heah um moanin an groanin in duh creek ef yuh goes neah deah tuh-day.

775 "I bin seein ghos all muh life.[59] One time a ghos try tuh 789 skeah me an uh git mad and den he leab me. Muh fus wife is dead, an muh second wife heah kin see uh come roun mos any time. She kin see any uh duh kin folks wut dead.

"Ef I goes tuh duh cimiterry at twelve o'clock at night I kin see any one uh duh dead folks standin at duh head bode uh deah grabe. Den dey settle down an disappeah."

754 Mose Brown ** who lived near by told us, "I bin rid by 789 witches [69] an seed a thousandn mo ghos.[59] I see um mos any time. Dey jis float long bout two feet frum duh groun. Sometime dey come in a wirlwin.

789 "One day at duh rosin yahd deah come up a wirlwin. I see a big wite man in it. I show im tuh duh udduh men but [845] dey dohn see im. I kin see im cuz uh wuz bawn wid a double caul [4] an foot foemos. Dat gib yuh duh powuh tuh see um. [775] A ghos come heah ebry night an peep in duh soouh obuh

* *Paul Singleton, Tin City.*
** *Mose Brown, Tin City.*

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deah. He look in duh soouh, walk tuh duh cawnuh, an den disappeah. Any night I'm on dis stoop I kin see im.

"My gran use tuh tell me bout folks flyin back tuh Africa. A man an his wife wuz brung frum Africa. Wen dey fine out dey wuz slabes an got treat so hahd, dey jis fret an fret. One day dey wuz standin wid some udduh slabes an all ub a sudden dey say, 'We gwine back tuh Africa. So goodie bye, goodie bye.' Den dey flied right out uh sight."

"No, I nebuh see no ghos, but uh kin feel em," [59] said another resident of the community. This was Emma Monroe,* an elderly woman who had formerly been a slave on a plantation known as Wilton Bluff Plantation. "Wen a ghos is roun muh haiah rise up on muh head an sumpm tech me an uh feel strange all tru. It's duh same wen witches is roun. Deah's plenty folks roun yuh duh witches ride.[59] Dey kin git in yuh house nebuh mine how yuh shut up.

"Duh ole folks use tuh tell us chillun duh story bout people dat flied off tuh Africa.[59c] I blieb um bout flyin. Some folks kin wuk roots too. Dey hab duh powuh tuh lay down sumpm tuh hahm yuh,[15] an udduhs hab duh powuh tuh moob wut dey done put down fuh yuh.[6] I ain nebuh bin rooted yit, cuz I stay way frum sech people.

"One ting I do blieb in is signs. Ef yuh watch signs, dey alluz mean good aw bad luck tuh yuh. Ef muh lef eye jump, I kin look fuh bad nooz, and ef muh right eye jump, I kin look fuh good nooz. Same ting wen yuh han itch. Yuh lef han mean yuh gwine tuh git a piece uh money; yuh right han say yuh gwine shake hans wid a strainjuh. Wen yuh foot itch, yuh gwine tuh walk on strange lan aw go tuh duh grabeyahd. Dogs an chickens an buds all make signs dat mean sumpm. Ef somebody is comin, a roostuh come right up tuh duh doe an crow. Ef a dog sets up a howlin, somebody in duh neighbuhhood gwine die. A screech owl screechin roun tells yuh somebody neah by gwine die." [44]

* *Emma Monroe, Tin City.*

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*Yamacraw**

YAMACRAW TAKES ITS NAME FROM THE LITTLE INdian town that Tomochichi, chief and friend of General Oglethorpe, established on the Savannah River bluff west of the township of Savannah over two hundred years ago. Today waterfront industries have pushed the Negro district southward from the bluff, but it is still so close to the river that some of the small shanties rattle when winds roar across the water.

In this community the residents are drawn largely from coastal counties of Georgia and South Carolina. At one time an unruly element gained Yamacraw the reputation of being the toughest section of Savannah, but the presence of an unusual number of churches of various denominations seems to have improved law and order in recent years. Intense religious interest is aided by pride felt in the fact that the first Negro Baptist church in America was established here and also that Methodism gained an earlier start among Yamacraw Negroes than in any other part of the county.

In spite of the difference in religious doctrines there seem to be certain common beliefs handed down in families. We found an implicit and readily asserted faith in the power "tuh do unnatchul ting." Ghosts are everyday experiences. Root doctors are in constant demand.

* *Old Yamacraw has gone. Since late in 1939 there has been a radical physical change under the program of the Federal Housing Administration. Two thirds of the tumble-down brick houses and wooden shanties in the once crowded area have been replaced by modern concrete buildings with low rentals for Negro tenants.*

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789 [115] mention this story to Carrie Hamilton,* whom we next visited.

"I hab heah uh dem people," said this seventy year old woman, who has the tall, heavy frame of a plantation hoe hand. "Muh mudduh use tuh tell me bout em wen we set in duh city mahket sellin vegetubbles an fruit. She say dat deah wuz a man an he wife an dey git fooled abode a slabe ship. Fus ting dey knew dey wuz sole tuh a plantuh on St. Helena. So one day wen all duh slabes wuz tuhgedduh, dis man an he wife say, 'We gwine back home, goodie bye, goodie bye,' an jis like a bud dey flew out uh sight.[89c]

[845] "Muh mudduh use tuh tell me all kine uh ting cuz I wuz bawn wid a caul [4] an wuz diffrunt frum duh res. Ebry now an den I see ghos. Dey hab all kine uh shape, sometime no 775 head, sometime no feet, jis floatin by.[50a] Dey is duh spirits uh duh dead, but ef yuh dohn meddle in deah business, dey ain gwine meddle in yoze."

178 Not only among these older Yamacraw Negroes but among younger residents we found a solid background of ancestral beliefs and practices, for here little of modern progress has touched the dirt streets, pebbly walks, and tumble down houses of another day.

754 [593] [115] Ellen Dorsey,** forty years old, born in Savannah, gave us a detailed description of the conjure her husband put on her. "Me an him couldn git long so I lef im. He went tuh a root doctuh [48] fuh him tuh make me come back home. Den duh root doctuh put me down sick so duh wite people I wuz wukin fuh would dischahge me. I had pains runnin up an down muh whole body, an I knowed I wuz cunjuhed but uh 754 wouldn gib in.[15] I call me in a man who use tuh try tuh sell 755 me a han tuh wawd off cunjuh.[12a, c, d] He rub muh legs down twice a day, an one mawnin a big black snake run outuh muh big toe.[50] 'Deah goes duh devil,' say duh root man, an frum

* *Carrie Hamilton, 530 West President Street.*
** *Ellen Dorsey, 515 West Congress Street.*

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754 den on I git bettuh. A cousin uh mine git a dose once an
755 wen duh root doctuh rub uh all ovuh wid a cleah liquid, bugs begin crawlin out of uh skin.[5, 15] Duh doctuh say if she had wait one mo day it would uh bin too late."

754 "Did your husband ever try any more conjure on you?" She laughed with great amusement. "He sho did. He went tuh duh same man dat cuo me an give him thutty dolluhs tuh make me go back tuh him. One Sunday attuh chuch wen I ain had thought of evuh livin wid muh huzbun agen, I walked out duh chuch straight tuh muh huzbun's house. An dis happen," concluded Ellen, "widout duh root man evuh seein me. I didn know nuthin bout it till long attuh we wuz reconcile."

115 Evans Brown * is only fifty years old. To see him going daily about his duties as janitor of the West Broad Street Negro School, no one would suspect unusual powers at work beneath his good-natured exterior. Yet he not only said that he believed absolutely in the supernatural but proudly asserted that he could work magic himself.

• 775 "It come natchul tuh me, duh powuh tuh do suttn ting.
787 Since I wuz lill I could see ghos, sometime two feet off duh groun, sometime walkin. Wen muh haiah rise on en an hot eah pass muh face, I tun roun an deah's alluz a ghos. Lots uh time it's duh spirit ub a frien. Many wintuh mawnins wen I go tuh school early tuh make fyuhs, uh hea' doze open an shut an den uh see duh ghos dat do it.[59]

754 "I didn know I hab powuh tuh do tings till muh mudduh wuz fixed. Yuh know, a man kin fix a dose fuh a suttn pusson an only dat pusson will git caught. Fo women wuz in duh house wid muh mudduh, but duh doe knob wuz dressed fuh huh. All dem women pass out befo she did, all tuhnin duh knob. But wen she come out, a pain strik uh in duh side. We hab doctuhs but nuttn done no good. Uh whole side tun black an she die.[15]

* *Evans Brown, West Broad Street School.*

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"Can you tell us why?" we queried, but she only shook her head.

"All I know is dat dey's bad luck. I foun dat out, an I wohn leh one come in muh house."

Handicraft objects in this section were more numerous than in many of the other communities. We found a most unusual brush * made from the palmetto.[45a] It was about four inches in length and two inches wide; both bristles and back had been made from a single piece of the rough fiber of the palmetto bark, spliced into splinters on one surface to form the bristles.

The work of two wood carvers was brought to our attention. One of the carvers ** made a specialty of small wooden figures (Plate Ia, Ib). He showed us several full length human figures, two or three busts mounted on square blocks of wood, and two oddly shaped objects, each with mask-like features carved on one surface.[41i] When we remarked on the originality of his work and its symmetry of design, he said simply, "I jis picked it up wen I wuzn wukin."

The other carver † had made several nondescript figures, but we were chiefly interested in two linked wooden chains (Plate Ia). One of these, which had an attached box with a ball enclosed, was similar to a chain previously shown us by another man in the community. Each man had cut his chain with all its details from a single block of wood.[70f, h]

In Frogtown and Currytown there is intense interest shown in witches, spirits, and conjure. Personal experiences were related to us by several old residents, who had come in contact with supernatural elements.

Old Henry Gamble ‡ told us that he has been accustomed to "seein tings" since childhood. Particularly on rainy nights ghosts appear to him. He said, "Sometimes dey float

* *Made by and property of Professor Redmond, Park Avenue and West Broad Street, Currytown.*
** *Jerome Carter, 445 Jefferson Street, Frogtown.*
† *Preston Coleman, 532 Charles Street, Frogtown.*
‡ *Henry Gamble, 519 West Broad Street, Currytown.*

A, [See Category 322, plate following p. xxxii-A--Analyst]

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775 right at muh side.[59] Ise use tuh um now an it's jis lak natchul people tuh me. Yuh kin skeah witches an ghos ef yuh make a cross mahk. Dis will stop um frum followin yuh."

[789]

[115] Seventy-five year old Henry Bates • readily acknowledged a belief in the supernatural. "I done seen all kine uh strange ting happen in muh lifetime. Yuh wahn me tuh tell yuh bout some uh dem ting, missus?

775 787 "One night I finished eatin dinnuh. Den I walk tuh duh kitchen doe. I see a strange man comin down duh road; he wuz twenty yahds away. I tun muh head tuh look in duh house an wen uh look back he done disappeahed. I know he mustuh been a ghos.[59]

776 787 "Anudduh time I heah a knock on duh doe. I heah it tree times. Bam! Bam! Bam! Wen muh dog heah dat knock, he holluh lak he wuz sked tuh det. I git up an go tuh duh doe an muh haiah riz up on muh head. Wen uh gits tuh duh doe, uh see sumpm as big as a cow, only it look lak a dog.[54] Den it vanish lak a shadduh.

754 787 "One night muh wife an me git ready tuh go tuh bed. We fasten duh doe an winduh. Attuh a time we heah a noise. Den we heah a click. Duh winduh come open jis lak somebody open it. I strike a match an uh see a big yulluh cat walkin long side duh bed. It hab a face jis lak a pusson. It go right out duh winduh.

"I fine out latuh dat duh cat wuz a witch.[68] Witches is jis livin people wut bin sole tuh duh debil. Lots uh nights I kin feel em ridin me. Jis duh udduh day I wuz sittin in a cheah an I dozed off tuh sleep. All at once a hag jump on me an staht ridin me.[69]

[776]

789 "Wen I wuz a boy I heah lots uh stories bout people flyin. Some folks brung obuh frum Africa could fly off aw disappeah anytime dey wanted tuh. I alluz belieb dat story.

• *Henry Bates, 1118 West Waldbury Street, Currytown.*

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791 I know folks right now dat kin make duh spirits uh dead
• (775) people come back.[56]

"Wen I wuz jis growin up I knowd a boy dat hab a strange powuh. Eben ef he wuzn wid duh udduh boys he could tell each one wut he bin doin.[22a, •] One day attuh we grown up he say dat he could bring back folks dat hab lef town an gone away.

791 "Now deah wuz a uhmun whose huzbun hab lef uh. Dis
789 uhmun wuz jis frettin uhsef tuh det. Muh frien go tuh uh an say, 'I will cause yuh huzbun tuh come back tuh yuh. I will chahge yuh ten dolluhs. Yuh needn pay me till he come back, but ef yuh dohn pay me den, he wohn stay.'

"In a week's time duh uhmun's huzbun wuz back. He stay home till he die. Duh uhmun pay muh frien in piece payments till she pay im duh ten dolluhs."

115 Living in a dirt lane on the fringe of Currytown is Chloe
West • who was born at White Bluff and cannot remember
(775) her exact age. She told us that she frequently sees ghosts[59]
(787) and that a spirit warns her when anything out of the ordinary is about to happen.[22a, •]

"One time I wuz bodduhed by duh folks nex doe wut wuz
754 tryin tuh cunjuh me. Somebody tell me tuh git some hot
775 watuh an tro it wen I heah duh noise. Jis as I git duh
787 watuh hot, duh spirit ub a wite uhmun I use tuh wuk fuh peahed an tell me tuh pray an duh witches would go way.
755 Attuh she spoke, duh witches went out an nebuh did bodduh me since. Duh witches wuz two men. One ub um went crazy an duh poeleece foun duh udduh one out in duh woods. He died in duh po house.

754 "One night I heah a noise at muh winduh. A voice say, 'Chloe, dohn go neah duh winduh.' I stop a minute, den uh go tuh duh winduh. Some kine uh powduh wuz trone in muh face dat bline me.[8b] Den duh voice tell me tuh wash muh

• *Chloe West, 623 West Waldburg Lane.*

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754 face quick in karisene. I do dat an duh blineness leab me.

"Anudduh time duh uhmun wut lib nex doe want me tuh moob an she git a cunjuh bag an bury it unduh muh step.[15] Duh spirit wahn me agen an tell me a man would fine duh cunjuh fuh me. Duh nex day Doctuh Johnson, a root 754 man,[16] come by. He say sumpm wuz laid down fuh me an 755 he would take it up fuh fifty cent. I paid him duh money. He come back dat night, dig unduh muh steps, an take out a buni. It hab some dut an some haiah [17] an sulphuh in it. Doctuh Johnson say it wuz grabe yahd dut.[9] Bin a long time since I bin bodduhed but uh sho belieb in all dem tings.

• 775 "Duh fus time I ebuh see ghos wuz long yeahs back. Once 787 wen I wuz young an receivin compny, deah wuz two men comin tuh see me. I lak one man duh bes an duh udduh man wuz jealous. Well, duh jealous man die. Aftuh dat many a time uh see a shadduh lak him come right up tuh muh doe an disappeah. One night he come, stretch he ahm cross duh doe, an say jis as plain as anyting in a big loud voice, 'Is dat udduh man still comin roun yuh?' I wuz sked stiff."

754 D. C. Kelsey,* who has been blind for six years, told us [115] that conjure had caused the loss of his sight.

"An I ain had duh money tuh git nobody tuh tun dis ting back on duh one dat put it on me," he complained.

115 He looked pleased when a piece of money was placed in 789 his hand. When we asked why he blew on the coin, he smiled slowly. "Dat make mo luck. It'll hep me tuh git mo. Yuh know, a root man, he wohn take money out yuh han. He tell yuh tuh put it on duh table aw duh shef."

We encouraged him to continue on the subject of root men.

754 "Dey kin fix yuh wid mos anyting," Kelsey said. "Duh [825] chinch bug is use a lot an Ise sked ub em. I wouldn put muh han on dem ting fuh ten dolluhs. I hab a sistuh name Ida Walker wut wuz fix wid candy. She ate duh candy an den

* *D. C. Kelsey, 521 West Gaston Street, Frogtown.*

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754 115 [291] [301] Her age was uncertain; she was gaunt and sickly in appearance. Her outfit consisted of a dull gray waist with a turban to match and a faded blue skirt. Large brass earrings dangled from her ears, making her lean face appear still more woebegone. Certainly there was something wrong with the woman, for she dragged listlessly with the effort of walking the short distance from the house.

We inquired about her health but when we asked about the "cunjuh" which had been put upon her, she looked at us distrustfully, saying, "Muh huzbun tell yuh bout dat." With that she left us abruptly.

[291] Soon the man * appeared, a bent figure in ragged blue overalls, with a battered felt hat on his grizzled head. Unlike his wife, Stephen Bryant was talkative and friendly, and he told us readily of his wife's strange predicament. "She 754 wuz cunjuhed by uh own sistuh," he began. "Some days [593] she all right an kin cook an clean up; den all at once tings git tuh runnin all obuh uh body.[5] Sometimes she fall down an hab tuh be put tuh bed."

We asked Stephen if he had consulted any root doctors [48] about his wife's condition and he said, "I hab monuh dozen root doctuhs tuh uh but dey dohn do uh no good. I keep on tryin an maybe some day I fine duh right un tuh reach duh cunjuh."

In this instance retribution seemed to have come swiftly, for Stephen told us that the sister who had caused the conjure was now "laid up uhsef wid cunjuh, fuh someone cas a spell on huh too."

787 When we asked Stephen if he believed in evil spirits, he nodded in affirmation. "I sees um all duh time," he said. • 775 "Dey is lill an wite an hab no head.[54, 55] Yuh nebuh see um 776 till attuh duh sun gone down. Yuh dohn bodduh um none an dey leab yuh lone.

"Deah use tuh be a ole house right pas ours. Ebry night

* *Stephen Bryant, Springfield.*

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we would be woke up by a loud bangin noise. Ef we look out duh winduh we could see dis spirit. He wuz alluz wanduhin roun. Ebry now an den he would tro a rock at a ole gasoline tank an it would make dat noise we heah.[55] We alluz use tuh tink deah wuz buried treasure neah an dis spirit wuz gahdin it.[61] I nebuh did look fuh duh treasure, I dohn wahn tuh fool wid no spirits. Attuh a time dey tuk down duh house an duh spirit nebuh did come back no mo."

Another victim of conjure,* a Negro man of about eighty-eight, told us that although he did not usually believe superstitious tales, his own strange experience had forced him to realize that "folks kin fix yuh." "One time I fall down sick frum a puhculeyuh disease. Nuttn didn do no good till uh hab a root uhmun come in. Right away she tell me a enemy done put down a dose fuh me.[15] She say I wuz fined in fish. Well, den, she tell me tuh drink a haffuh pint uh wiskey and tro way duh uddub res uh duh pint. Attuh uh done dis, uh git well agen.[6]

"I knows a case uh fixin right now. It's a young man wut dohn lib fah frum yuh. He alluz complainin bout crickets crawlin unduh his skin an some uh duh neighbuhs say dey see um. I blieb dis mus be so cuz deah's a uhmun roun yuh wut kin make a han tuh put any kine uh insec in yuh body.[5] She kill duh insec an grine it tuh powduh an rub it on duh skin uh duh pusson aw gib it tuh um tuh drink. Wen it entuh duh body, it tun back intuh insec, sometime a lizud aw a frawg aw a snake."

The old man continued, "Ise had plenty sperience bout root wuk,[48] but I alluz try tuh keep way frum dat kine uh folks. I membuh ole Doctuh Sheppard who use tuh oppurate yuh. He hab hunduds uh folks come tuh him day an night. He mustuh been bery good.

"Deah wuz a uhmun name Clara an she wuz good too. She use tuh ketch lots uh Doctuh Sheppard's customuhs. I

* *Charles Singleton, Springfield.*

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754 with another woman * in the community, we again discussed the subject of conjure. This woman told us, "Deah's plenty cunjuh in dis neighbuhhood. Deah wuz a man and his wife libed yuh. Duh man couldn git wuk an he went away. Attuh he lef, duh wife wuz took sick; dey say she wuz cunjuhed,[15] an dey sen fuh duh huzbun. Wen he git home he git a root doctuh tuh visit uh.[48] Duh root man go tuh duh back step an dig a hole, an deah he fine nails an sulphuh an haiah an some grabeyahd dut. In duh pilluhs an mattresses an in duh dressuh draws, dey fine duh same ting. Dem tings run uh crazy. She ack queah an run away an stay fuh days at a time. Duh root doctuh moob duh cunjuh an she wuz cuod. He gie uh duh powuh tuh disappeah an appeah any time she want tuh. I heah bout lots uh folks wut kin disappeah lak dat. Duh ole folks use tuh tell bout duh people wut could take wing an fly right back tuh Africa.[69c]

755 789

• 775 787 "I alluz know deah wuz witches an ghos. Attuh I gits married muh huzbun tell me dat he sees ghos.[59] He describe duh ghos tuh me. It wuzn long fo I wuz seein duh ghos too. Sometime he would say tuh me, 'Deah go a spirit. It jis floatin long, ain got no head.' Sho nuff, deah I would see a shadduh floatin by me.

"Sometime muh huzbun see duh spirit uh some frien ub ours. Dat wuz a sho sign sumpm gwine happen tuh dat pusson, eeduh sickness aw det. One day he see a ghos ub a close frien uh his. Duh nex day he git a tiligram wut say duh frien wuz dead.

763

754 791 "I knowd folks dat wuz witches; dey nebuh bodduhed me but jis picked on muh huzbun. Ain a night hahdly pass wen dey ain ride im.[69] Deah wuz a uhmun libed on duh same street we did. We use tuh call uh An Sally, duh cunjuh uhmun. She could tell fawchuns[22] an gib hans[8c, d] an fix yuh enemies fuh yuh. She ain seem tuh like muh huzbun. Ef she pass our house durin duh day, dat night she come an

754

* *Dorothy Johnson, 1801 Murphy Avenue.*

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754 ride im.[69] Dis went on till he staht pinin away. He git disagreeable roun duh home an denne went away. He ain nebuh come back. I tink somebody git uh tuh fix im.[15] Dat sho convince me uh duh powuh uh cunjuh."

•775 The spirits of the dead are believed to return and visit their former neighbors, sometimes as frequently as in life.[56] Their presence is not always regarded with dread but is often looked upon as a natural incident. One woman made the following statement: "I know deah's ghos, fuh I kin see um. Ef any uh muh friens die, I kin see um mos anytime. Dey peah jis as natchul as wen dey wuz libe."

771 178 On the fringe of the community was a small store at which we stopped for a few minutes. The proprietress, a robust, good-natured Negro woman of middle age, talked with us amiably and verified the numerous reports regarding superstitions that her neighbors had already confided in us. In parting we inquired if she thought the people's faith in the supernatural was weakening. The woman regarded us with a wide smile. Shaking her head she declared emphatically, "No, ma'am, dey sho ain losin no faith in magic an sech tings. All deah libes dey heah bout um frum duh ole folks. Seem lak tuh me dey beliebin in um mo an mo all duh time."

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757 825 I make a medicine out uh duh spiduh[5] by stooin eel skin in lahd wid it. Wen dis is done, I hab a saave dat will stop any kine uh pain. On duh iluns, specially St. Catherine, duh spiduh is hel in high regahd by some uh duh people.[53]

757 "I make muh medicine out uh King Physic root, an Indian Ash, an Tukish Wine. Wen I wuz a boy I lun many tings frum duh ole people bout herbs dat wuz good fuh diffunt ailments. Deah wuzn so many doctuhs in dem days. We hab tuh fine remedies fuh our sickness an know how tuh cuo snake bite aw cuts an boils, eben female complaints. So I lun wut herbs tuh use fuh deze ailments too.

[752] "I kin cuo any rattlesnake bite in twenty-fo hours. Duh remedy is King Physic, tuhpentine, an wiskey. Attuh duh pizen is kill, gib em plenty sweet milk an ebryting will be all right in twenty-fo hours.

[237] [825] "Duh spiduh web is good fuh stoppin duh blood wen anybody git cut. I make a saave by stooin physic vine leaves an talluh an spiduh tuhgedduh. Dis saave will relieve any bruise aw ole so. It draw all duh pizen out uh duh so.[48a, b]

• 775 789 "Tuh keep ghos away, missus, yuh hab tuh go in duh woods an fine a tree dat wuz strik by lightin, an git some uh duh bahk an put some unduh duh doe step an carry a piece in yuh pocket. No ghos would ebuh bodduh yuh agen. I done dat an ain been bodduh since. Now all yuh hab tuh do tuh keep witches frum ridin yuh is keep a Bible unduh yuh pilluh at night."[13]

759 757 [15] [278] Another root doctor * in the section told us that he had been born with a special knowledge of healing and had studied the science of herbs from the time he was a small boy.[48] Some of the herbs he uses in his mixtures are Golden Seal, Yellow Dust, Golden Thread, Hippo Root, Pink Root, Lady Slipper, Yellow Root, Blood Root, Rattlesnake Master, Black Snake Root, and John the Conqueror.

[787] "I know in a dream," he said, "jis wen a patient is comin

* *George W. Little, 737 West 34th Street.*

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duh spirit an keep it frum followin yuh back tuh duh house. I knowd a uhmun at Burroughs wut use tuh carry food tuh uh daughtuh grabe ebry day.[58] She would take a basket uh cooked food, cake, pies, an wine. Den she would carry dishes too an set out a regluh dinnuh fuh duh daughtuh an uhsef. She say duh daughtuh's spirit meet uh deah an dey dine tuhgedduh."

Another woman * told us that on holidays she carried food to her husband's grave and left it there for the spirit to come and get.[58] "I carry duh kine uh food we use tuh hab tuh eat on duh days he wuz off frum wuk," she said. "I take cooked chicken an cake an pie an cigahs—he like tuh smoke attuh eatin.[58a, b] I do dis cuz I know he will be lookin fuh me tuh bring it.

"Ebuh since I kin membuh I hab heahd bout spirits wanduhin roun at night,"[59] she continued. "Muh mothuh nebuh would let us go tuh bed at night widout leabin plenty uh watuh in duh pails fuh duh spirits tuh drink wile yuh sleep. Ef yuh dohn leab no watuh dey wohn leh yuh res good. I tink das wy hags ride some folks,[69] cuz dey dohn leab no watuh. I blieb witches is people dat's sole deah soul tuh duh debil. Dey hab duh powuh tuh change frum deah own shape tuh anyting dey wants tuh be,[68] so dey kin tawment udduh folks. Wen a ghos is roun I kin feel duh hot eah."

We found that belief in supernatural beings such as witches and ghosts was widespread throughout the community.

"Witches is lak folks," one woman said.** "Dey done sell demsefs tuh duh debil an he make em do anyting he wants tuh. Some git a grudge gense yuh an stahts tuh ride yuh.[69] No mattuh wut yuh do, dey kin git in yuh house. Sometime dey come lak a mouse, sometime a rabbit, an sometime eben a roach.[68] I membuh heahin bout a witch wut

* *Bessie Reese, 2407 Harden Street.*
** *Emma English, 628 West 38th Street.*

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754 come ebry night lak a rabbit an rode a woman. A man wut knowd duh woman laid a trap fuh duh witch. Duh witch scape frum duh house, but duh dogs track uh down. Wen she see she wuz caught, she beg duh man not tuh do nuttn tuh uh an she wouldn nebuh do no mo witchin."

• 775 787 (115) A Negro preacher * in a near by section said that he had been in the habit of seeing ghosts all his life.[58, 59] "Once wuz jis aftuh muh fathuh died. I saw him all dressed up an weahin a Stetson hat. I called muh mothuh an said, 'Mothuh, heah come Papa.' Wen I tun roun, he wuz gone.

"Aftuh I marry I moob out by duh watuh wuks. A frien uh mine name Arthur Perry die. Some time latuh anothuh frien die. One night I wuz lyin down wen I heah a noise. I look up an deah wuz two men all dressed up in wite, walkin cross dat room. As I watch em dey begin tuh shrink till dey wuzn no bigguhn dawls. Den dey disappeah. I see ghos mos any time, so Ise used to it now."

754 775 That he was frequently visited by both witches and ghosts was the assertion of another man.** "Duh witches come in an strangle me," [69] he said, "but duh ghos yuh jis see, an no hahm come frum um. Jis las night attuh I gone tuh bed a ghos come in muh house.[59] I hab tuh git up an run im out. Sometime dey pull duh cubbuh right off muh bed."

754 The same man said considerable conjuring was being practiced in the neighborhood, but that he kept a careful distance from people who were believed to be able to "do tings tuh yuh."[15]

"Yuh see," he volunteered, "I hab muh leg fix once. Dat wuz back in 1893. Fus muh foot swell up, den muh leg. It wuz so bad I couldn walk. A man tole me tuh go tuh Doctuh Buzzud, a root doctuh.[48] Doctuh Buzzud gimme some root medicine an in no time I wuz all right."[6] (157)

* *Harry Higgins, 1810 West Broad Street.*
** *Albert Jenkins, 627 West 36th Street.*

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754 he speak tuh me, I tell im all bout duh root wuk an wy uh fyuhd duh gun. I ax im wouldn he uh done duh same an he say, 'Cose, but dohn do it agen.'

"I bin tuh duh poeleece tuh hep me but dey cuss me out. Once wen dat poeleece show up, duh uhmun wut tryin tuh fix me staht combin uh haiah. She kep it up till duh poeleece jis walk away. Den I went tuh a root doctuh an he tole me duh poeleece caahn do nuttn long as duh uhmun comb uh haiah. He tell me tuh use tuhpentine tuh destroy duh han wut she put down fuh me. Duh uhmun jist keep on wukin gense me an nobody couldn do nuttn tuh stop uh so I know I bettuh moob fo she git muh spirit."

534 In Brownville we found a man who knew how to make the old time drums. He made one for us out of a hollow log, across the end of which he tightly stretched a goat skin. He fastened the skin to the log by means of a number of wooden pegs. Unlike modern drums, this one was taller than it was wide, measuring about eighteen inches in length and ten inches in diameter.[35]

(115) The drum maker, James Collier,* a middle-aged, intelligent, well-educated Negro (Plate VI), said he had made a number of drums in this primitive manner. Collier told us 764 that he had heard of drums having been used during funeral 533 ceremonies in former years. The mourners beat the drum while on the way to the cemetery; after arriving they marched around the grave in a ring and beat the drum and shouted.[34] "They call it the dead march," explained the man.

• 795 "The spirit don't stay in the grave," he went on. "When the funeral procession stahts tuh leave, the spirit leaves the body an follows the people frum the graveyahd. It nevuh stays with the body."[56] A little later he volunteered the additional information, "Fuh the spirit tuh rest in the grave (764) folks have tuh be buried at home. They nevuh feel right ef

* *James Collier, 806 West 39th Street.*

A, [See Category 142, plate following p. xxxii-F--Analyst]

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•775 (764) they buried frum home. The spirit jist wanduh aroun.[1]

"I have seen something I think wuz a ghost. I have no explanation of it, but I think it wuz supuhnatural. I have heard of witchcraft, cunjuh an magic. I believe some of these things happen, and the mo yuh probe intuh them the less yuh know.

789 "I have heard about a magic hoe that folks put in the gahden. They speak certain words tuh it; then the hoe goes ahead an cultivates the gahden without anyone touching it. They jist tell it tuh do the wuk and it does it." [39]

775 789 We questioned Collier again about his personal experiences with supernatural beings and he related the following story:

"Wen I wuz jist a young boy muh family use tuh live in Currytown. Me and muh brothuh use tuh go and see muh aunt who lived in Yamacraw. Tuh get frum our house tuh wheah she lived we had tuh go past a cemetery which wuz in back of the Union Station.

"One time we had been tuh see muh aunt and it got tuh be late. We stahted fuh home. It wuz beginnin of night. Muh brothuh he had rheumatism an he wuz hobblin along on a stick. We stahted along by a fence tuh get tuh West Broad Street an wen we had gone about a hundred yards we saw a lady comin tuhwards us.[40] She wuz very feah, very feah, an she wuz all dressed in black and had on a long black veil. Her dress wuz black silk and rustled as she walked.

"Muh brothuh an I, we were suhprised tuh see the lady all of a sudden, fuh we hadn't noticed her befo. She come up tuh us an she say, 'Are yuh goin roun the fence?' We tell her we wuz an she say, 'Yuh not afraid?' an we say, 'No—we not afraid.'

"The lady wanted tuh walk with us an we all staht walkin along. We had gone a short ways wen all of a sudden we look in the cemetery an we see a little white thing risin up out of the groun. It wuz kinduh hazy an shadowy an it

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spring up from the groun an streak out tuh meet us on the path ahead. It looked like a lill animal.[54]

"The lady, wen she see the lill white sumpms a comin, she daht out like lightin an she go right tuh meet it. Wen she get tuh it she disappeah right intuh the eah, disappeah right befo our eyes. Muh brothuh fuhgot he wuz crippled, he drop his stick an staht runnin, an I run too. An we nevuh stop runnin, kept right on goin till we got home tuh Currytown. He don't like to speak of it tuhday cause we're not supuhstitious."

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of schooling as evinced by her diction. She is a devout member of the Adventist Church, her day of worship coming on Saturday instead of the customary Sunday, a day observed and anticipated by the average Negro.

"Silvia Higgins," Esther testified, "wuz a medium. She talked with spirits all huh life.[56a, b] She used the rapping signal. I myself have seen the work and acts of spirits. I've seen cheahs and tables move about a room. And I've seen a woman and a boy come intuh my yahd and then disappeah, and I know that the woman wuz dead. The boy wuz not dead but wuz not anywheah in this vicinity. Silvia Higgins wuz my mothuh. She has been dead thirty-two yeahs."

One of the most interesting Negroes in this settlement is Tonie Houston,* an old preacher, extremely gracious of manner and eager to be of help.

"I bin yuh in dis town fo dey wuz no big buildings an duh streets wuz all dut an deah wuz no pavement."

"Do you remember any of the people brought over from Africa?" we asked.

"Yas, I know heaps ub um. Deah wuz 'Golla' John Wiley, Golla' Jim Bayfield—he wuz bought by Mahse Chahles Lamar, and he sole im to Mr. McMullen. Den deah wuz 'Golla' Jack, 'Golla' Tom, 'Golla' Silvie, 'Golla' Chahles Carr, 'Golla' Bob, Chahlotte, Cain, an Jeanette, an 'Golla' Alice. Dey wuz all bought by Mr. McMullen."

When asked the meaning of so many "Gollas," he replied, "All duh people wut come frum Africa aw obuhseas wuz call 'Golla,' and dey talk wuz call 'Golla' talk." His knowledge of their language, gained by association with the Africans, was scant. Among the words he remembered were *musungo* tobacco, *mulafo* whiskey, and *sisure* chicken. A cow was called *gombay* [35g] and a hog *gulluh*.

To questions regarding the utensils, such as buckets, tubs,

* *Tonie Houston, Tatemville.*

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I caahn see um but uh feels um. Sometime wen folks is comin tuh me I kin tell dey comin fo I see um, an wen yuh die yuh head tun backwud.[57] Soon's yuh die it tun roun.

"Duh folks frum Africa could see um. Dey natchul bawn dat way. An wite dogs![46] Dey alluz kin see spirit. Muh brudduh Simon he bawn wid a caul an he see um an play wid um.[4] Dey would climb trees an he climb attuh um so muh mudduh give um some tea made frum caul uh women an bline um tuh um."

We endeavored to gain some information as to the ingredients of this tea but the only explanation was that the concoction was more effective when made from cauls of women.

He could remember nothing as to the use of drums at funerals or other gatherings but his eyes twinkled when we turned the conversation to a culinary line.

"Ma would make ash cake," he recalled. "She would mix duh cawnmeal, den open duh oak ashes an spread in some hickory leaves, den put duh cawnmeal on duh leabes an cubbuh wid mo leabes, den put duh hot ashes an coals on duh top. Wen it done, she take duh bread frum duh ashes an rub it wid a rough clawt aw brush an it would be pretty an brown. Dis," he concluded smacking his lips, "wuz bery fine wid fat meat aw surup."

Justine Singleton * believed firmly in the existence of spirits as verified by her statement. "Yes, wen I wuz sick muh sistuh das dead come tuh me an I knowd dat it wuz huh an she done talk tuh me. She tole me tuh git some weepin willuh an bile it an make a wash fuh muh feet." This, she explained is an excellent remedy for foot ailments. "I done talk tuh duh spirits many times. Sometime I gib em sumpm. I caahn tell yuh no mo now cuz I caahn git muh mine tuhgedduh."

In this locality stands a small one-room structure occu-

* *Justine Singleton, Tatemville.*

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duh seamstress fuh duh slabes. She make mos all dey weah."

When we asked her if she ever heard that dreaming about a snake "meant anything," the old woman replied, "Yes, ma'am, dat mean yuh got a enemy.[51] Not many nights ago I dream bout a snake an uh sho wuz sked wen uh wake up."

They both laughed and Susie leaned over and tapped Sophie on the arm and said, "Oh yes, deah's lots uh dem tings bout babies. Wen dey bawn wid a caul, das sho a sign dey will be bery wise an kin talk wid duh spirits.[4] Ain dasso, Sophie?"

Agreeing, Sophie hastened to add what she had heard about babies born with teeth. "Dey will hab bad luck all deah libes.[66] Dat sho wuk out. Deah wuz one boy bawn dat way wut lib right yuh in Wite Bluff an he wine up by bein in duh chain-gang an dat sho nuff bad luck."

"But dis lill plant heah called 'Cherokee' is spose tuh bring good luck ef yuh plants it by duh front doe step,"[34a] said Susie.

In this community as in many others strangers are not allowed to be buried in the local cemetery but in what is known as the "strangers lot," a piece of ground set apart from the cemetery proper. The custom of bringing the dead back to their original home for interment is also prevalent throughout coastal Georgia. The body of a young man who recently died in New York was brought back to White Bluff for burial. Relative to this custom, Susie spoke quietly. "Dey alluz brings um back tuh bury um ef dey kin git duh money, cuz yuh see duh spirit'll jis wanduh roun an nebuh be satisfied lessn it brung back home tuh be buried."[1]

"I know Lunnon Grayson know all bout dem tings too. Yuh tun off tuh duh lef at duh fus road leadin off frum duh highway yuh. Ax anybody den, an dey'll tell yuh wich is his house. He use tuh lib on St. Catherines too, but he come up yuh long fo me an Susie," Sophie said.

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WHITE BLUFF

789 "Muh gran say ole man Waldburg down on St. Catherine own some slabes wut wuzn climatize an he wuk um hahd an one day dey wuz hoein in duh fiel an duh dribuh come out an two ub um wuz unuh a tree in duh shade, an duh hoes wuz wukin by demsef. Duh dribuh say 'Wut dis?' an dey say, 'Kum buba yali kum buba tambe, Kum kunka yali kum kunka tambe,' quick like. Den dey rise off duh groun an fly away. Nobody ebuh see um no mo. Some say dey fly back tuh Africa. Muh gran see dat wid he own eye."

556 782 He had heard that on Blackbeard Island it was customary in the old days for a group of men to agree upon a location in which to bury their money, whereupon one of them would voluntarily offer his life and be put to death at the hands of the others, thereby enabling his spirit to stand guard and protect the treasure.

• 775 776 789 "I seen a spirit muhsef once wen I wuz a young man," Prince continued. "It wuz late in duh aftuhnoon. I wuz cookin crab an uh look up an see a man widout a head. I look away, den uh look back tuh weah uh see im, an sho nuff deah he is in plain sight. I rush tuh duh house an staht tuh tell muh fostuh mudduh but she stop me. She dohn wahn me tuh talk bout it. Den duh nex day she ax me wut uh see an fix me sumpm tuh drink an I nebuh did see no mo spirit."

754 [115] Another woman in the community, Bessie Royal,* in relation to her belief in witchcraft and conjure said, "Lots uh people roun yuh say dat hags ride um at night.[69] None ub um ebuh bodduhed me. Dey say dat duh hags is libe folks wut hab duh powuh tuh change demsefs intuh animals an insecs an any udduh ting dey want tuh be.[68]

"I dohn know how it wuz done but muh faduh wuz cunjuhed [15] by a suttn uhmun dat wuz said to be a hag.[69] He go crazy sometimes an ack lak he wuz sked by sumpm chasin im. He git wus and dey take im tuh a root doctuh. Duh root [755] doctuh say he wuz cunjuhed. He hab us ketch a wite chicken

* *Bessie Royal, White Bluff.*

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754 wich he split open wile duh chicken wuz still libe. He place
755 dis chicken, blood an all wile it wuz still wome, on top uh muh faduh head an boun it deah.

"Well, muh faduh git bettuh fuh a wile. Den all at once he hab anudduh attack an he die befo duh doctuh could git tuh im. Attuh dis I belieb in cunjuh mo dan ebuh."

115 Later that same day we visited a small Negro cabin set deep in the woods some distance from the highway. Here lived Serina Hall,* born eighty-eight years ago on St. Catherines Island and a former slave of Jacob Waldburg. She said that when she was a small child her master had brought the members of her family to Savannah to be employed as house servants.

The old woman at first disclaimed any knowledge of conjure or the existence of supernatural creatures. After a time, however, her attitude changed and she launched into a lengthy discussion of the current beliefs.

•795 "I dohn lak tuh talk bout dem tings," she began, "but I hab tuh belieb wut muh eyes see. I membuh once a man uh knew well got kill. Attuh he wuz buried his spirit use tuh (787) folluh me all duh time. I feel a heat come tuh me, den uh look roun, an deah a shadduh ub a man pass by. I ax duh spirit, 'Wut you want?' Den it leab me lone an I ain seen dat spirit sence." [58, 59]

754 We asked Serina if she had ever known any conjure workers and she said, "Witches an root men is duh same ting. Dey kin tun demsefs intuh any shape, a insec, a cat, aw a dog, aw any kine uh animal.[68] Dey kin go tru any kine uh hole tuh git at yuh.

"Tuh tun intuh sumpm else dey hab tuh hab duh powuh tuh take off deah skin. I heahd bout somebody watchin a hag take off is skin. He git some salt an peppuh an rub it on duh skin.[69a] Wen duh hag go tuh put is skin back on, duh salt an peppuh bun so he couldn git it on. Duh folks wuz

* *Serina Hall, White Bluff.*

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764
[777] "No, I dohn pay much mine tuh names," said Margaret Snead. "But I do pay tention tuh bad luck dates. Look uh po Catherine De Lanzy, depribe ub all duh propuh tings dat come fo burial, cuz it wuz a double bad luck date. Folks at
• [775] duh Pint do say dat uh spirit nebuh will res in duh grabe." [36]

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SANDFLY

761 Wen a pusson dies some one have fix im sho. Bout a yeah
754 ago an ole woman went fuh a walk right down this road yuh. She went up on a hill cross frum yuh weah she live an the nex mawnin she wuz foun dead theah. Mos folks said she wuz cunjuhed that night, though theah wuz some wut did say she have haht trouble. Jis a week aw so ago the brothuh of a neighbuh die right sudden an folks said he wuz cunjuhed too." • [15]

764 In regard to death we found a rigid observance of customs that were prevalent also in the other communities. For example, one Negro's body had been shipped back from New York City in order that it might be buried in Sandfly. Oth-
764 erwise, we were told, the spirit of the deceased would have found no rest, but instead would have roamed the country-
• 775 side.[1] Here, too, was observed the practice of placing broken bits of pottery and possessions last used by the dead person on the grave for the purpose of supplying the needs of the spirit.[47]

832 In Sandfly there is a ready market for love powders and charms.•• This field has been highly commercialized and
789 representatives of different corporations frequently visit
443 Sandfly selling such articles as *Adam and Eve Root, Lucky Mojo Love Drops, Black Cat Ashes,* and *Courting Powder.*[8] Apparently the women resort to the use of the love charms more frequently than the men, and their reason for doing so was described by one woman as being "so dat dey kin rule duh men." †

754 Old and young entertain a firm belief in the existence of witches and spirits. The witches may come in a variety of shapes, appearing as a person either male or female, an animal, or sometimes as an insect.[68] When questioned regarding the apparitions, one person said, "A witch ride muh sistuh mos every night.[69] He come singin a lill song. I

• *Lizzie Jenkins, Sandfly.*
•• *Ibid.*
† *Lee Baynes, Sandfly.*

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754 heah uh movin bout an moanin an in duh mawnin she is jis bout wone out an uh haiah is all tangled. Sometime she wake up an drive him away, but some nights he come back two aw three times an ride uh. In duh mawnin she jis too tied tuh go tuh wuk.*

"Deah wuz a ole woman in Savannah dat dey say wuz a witch. One night a ole man wake up an foun dis witch ridin im.[69] He say it look lak a bug.[68] He ketch it an break off duh leg at duh joint. Duh nex mawnin he go an see duh ole woman an sho nuff she have uh han all tie up wid a bandage. Dey tell me bout uh an I go see uh. Uh finguh wuz right off at duh joint."

• 775 Spirits of the dead often wander along the dark roadways,[56, 59] and frequently some belated stroller runs screaming in terror, declaring that he is being pursued.** The spirits may appear as misshapen men or women, as sheep, dogs, and cats.[54, 55] A spirit need not always assume the same appearance but may change form entirely each time.†

775 787 The following story was told by a woman in the community:

"I sho believe in spirits. I have seen em wid muh own eyes. One evenin jis as it wuz gittn dusty I wuz goin in tuh town tuh see duh dressmakuh. I walk tuh duh cah tracks an deah sittin on a rail wuz a lill tiny man, bout long as dis. I nevuh seen sech a lill man.[54b, 55] He wuz so lill he ain good fuh nuthin. I look at im hahd. On his head wuz a lill tin lamp wut gleamed in duh dahk. He wuz kine of an Indian culluh. He wuz a grown man fuh sho fuh he hab a lill mustache. I holluh fuh a man tuh come out an see wut I foun, but wen he git deah duh lill man hab disappeah. Jis den duh cah blowed an I hab tuh leab.

"Wen I gits home dat night, it wuz real dahk. I ain goin tuh walk dat dahk road by mysef an I holluh fuh every man

* *Lee Baynes, Sandfly.*
** *Ibid.*
† *Ibid.*

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SANDFLY

I knowd dat live neahby. I make em all walk home wid me, but deah wuzn no signs of duh lill man.

"Attuh dat lots of folks say dey see im. Wen duh moon is noo an deah is a drizzle, he come walkin along wid his lill lamp. He take all kine uh shapes. Sometime he's a man an sometime he's a animal.[54] Dey say he's comin roun cuz deah's buried treasure neah yuh." • [61]

Here in this little Negro community there seem to be few phases of life left untouched by superstitious fears. As one woman aptly expressed it—"Everything that happen is cause by cunjuh an magic. They jis dohn leave nuthin tuh Gawd." ••

• *Lee Baynes, Sandfly.*
•• *Lizzie Jenkins, Sandfly.*

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538 "Spiduh stories mus be bad. Caahn git duh mens tuh tell um tuh dis day. Dey jis say dey ain know nuttn bout um. Dey ain want tuh tell um tuh duh ladies."

[115] Gene,* Uncle Jack's stalwart son, who had for the most part stood quietly at the fringe of the little group and had volunteered no information at all, now contributed, "Doze spiduh stories ain nuttn but duhty jokes. Dat's all dey is. Yuh call a duhty joke 'An Nancy story.' Ain no stories tuh tell duh ladies." [33]

789 A sudden silence followed and we asked if any of the
567 group had heard of flying Africans. Uncle Jack's face
829 brightened. "Long as I kin membuh, missus, I been heahin bout dat. Lots uh slabes wut wuz brung obuh frum Africa could fly. Deah wuz a crowd ub um wukin in duh fiel. Dey dohn lak it heah an dey tink dey go back tuh Africa. One by one dey fly up in duh eah an all fly off an gone back tuh Africa."

789 As the old man was talking, the others nodded in agree-
[115] ment and mumbled that they too had heard of "folks wut could fly." Peter McQueen,** small and middle-aged, said, "Deah's folks wut kin fly eben now. Folks is alluz complainin bout bein rid by witches." [69]

754 There was again a murmur of agreement and we were able to catch snatches of conversation dealing with people in the neighborhood who had been ridden by witches.

Celia Small told us, "Dey's mosly folks yuh know. Jis change deah shape at night an come in duh house an ride yuh." [68]

"Now das sumpm reel," approved Uncle Robert. "I bin rid lots uh time by witches. Jis sit on yuh ches an ride yuh. Yuh wake up an feel lak yuh smudduhin. Ef yuh kin git duh succulation an tro um off, it all right."

•775 The talk of witches suggested other apparitions and we
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* *Gene Tattnall, Wilmington Island.*
** *Peter McQueen, Wilmington Island.*

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775 776 were informed that a variety of spirits were said to be seen on the island. These, it seemed, took different sizes and shapes and frequently appeared to the local residents.[54, 55, 59]

"Sometimes," said Celia, "doze spirits put spells on yuh, fix yuh."

754 "Spirits ain duh only ones," added Peter McQueen. "Folks kin wuk wid cunjuh too.[15] Ain dasso, Uncle Robert?"

"Dasso," Uncle Robert nodded sagely. "Muh own brud-duh wuz cunjuhed. He hab a spell put on um. He hab fits all duh time—hydrophobical fits—act lak he crazy. Nuttn we do hep im, an attuh a few yeahs he die."

754 789 "Only ting yuh kin do tuh keep frum bein cunjuhed is tuh carry a han," said Peter. "Mos folks tote a han wid um."[8, 12, a, c, d]

"Plenty folks kin fix yuh wid a han dey make deysef," said another voice.

754 "What are the charms made of?" we wanted to know.

"Haiah," "Nails,"[10] "Frum duh cloze" were the various responses and Celia enlarged on this information. "Ef yuh hab a enemy, nebuh let um git a piece uh yuh cloze. An yuh bun yuh haiah an yuh nail parins. Dey kin sho make pow-uhful han frum deze."

We inquired if many persons made a profession of this, and Peter informed us, "Sometimes dey git um frum a root doctuh."[8a, d, 48]

759 789 "Duh root doctuh kin hep yuh too," added Uncle Robert. "Dey is powful smaht. I use tuh heah tell ub a root man name Smaht McCall.[6, 48] Ef yuh git in any trouble, yuh jis go see um an he git yuh out ub it. Deah wuz a man wut got rested. He wuz plenty skeah bout wut would happen tuh um. He go see Smaht McCall an Smaht say not tuh worry cuz he would hep um. Duh day uh duh trial come an wen dey try duh case, a buzzud fly in duh cote house win-duh.[68b] He fly roun. Den he light on duh jedge desk. Well,

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Savannah an he is dressed in a long robe. He walk long an duh folks all mahch behine im. Dey goes down tuh duh ribbuh an sing as dey go. Dey alluz hab duh baptizin wen duh ti.. is goin out so duh watuh will wash duh sins away. Attuh dey all gits tuh duh ribbuh, dey stop an duh preachuh ast duh candidates tuh step fawwud. One by one he dip em in duh watuh an dey is buried in baptism. Wen dey is all baptize, duh preachuh pray tuh duh ribbuh an [62] ast dat all sins be taken away. Den all duh folks sing an shout an praise duh Lawd."

The little group leaning on the railing nodded in agreement and as if in memory of the ceremony their bodies swayed rhythmically. As we listened and watched we could almost see the white robed procession winding to the river bank; we could almost hear the chanting of the converts as their sins were washed away.

The conversation turned to burial customs in the section and the women told us that "settin-ups" were still held for those who died.

"We all sit wid duh body an sing an pray an keep duh spirit company," said one of them.

Another added, "At duh fewnul we sing an we puts our hands on duh cawpse tuh say goodbye. It bad luck not tuh do dis." [31]

We had heard in other communities that in case of death away from home the body is brought back to its native town for burial. This custom is also prevalent in Sunbury, we learned.

"Ebrybody wannuh be buried in deah own town," [1] Elizabeth said. "An we nebuh bury strainjuhs wid our own folks. Ef a strainjuh die yuh, we bury em in duh strainjuh's lot." [2]

Emma Stevens,* tall and slim, a baby in her arms and several small children gathered about her, spoke up, "Yuh got

* *Emma Stevens, Sunbury.*

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775 tuh be plenty keahful bout duh spirits. Duh spirit is hungry jis lak duh pusson. Yuh hab tuh put food in duh ruhm fuh duh spirit tuh come eat." [58]

"Dat is duh truth," agreed young Elizabeth. "Ef duh spirit is hungry, it will sho come back an hant yuh." [58f]

This talk of spirits started us on a new train of thought and we were curious to learn of the local theories regarding ghosts and witches.

"Duh spirit nebuh go in duh groun wid duh body," [56] volunteered Emma. "It jis wanduh roun. Dey come out wen duh moon is noo."

[115] Mary Stevens,* whose short, stocky figure was clad in bright pink and who wore a sailor hat perched rakishly on her head, stated, "Duh spirits is ebryweah. Dey peah mosly at duh fus dahk an in duh middle night."

Young Elizabeth, too, had something to say about spirits. "I sees em all duh time," she said. "Dey dohn hurt yuh none, jis walk long wid yuh an talk. Some hab duh head on an some hab duh head off." [59a]

754 From ghosts and shadows of the night the discussion followed its natural course to even darker powers, such as conjure, evil roots, and counter charms. The little group glanced slyly at one another. It was in lowered tones that they volunteered remarks on this subject.

"We do heah bout folks rootin each udduh all duh time.[15] Yuh sho hab tuh be keahful. Some folks weahs a dime aw a [789] penny tied on duh ankle an wen it tun black, dey knows some- [301] body is tryin tuh root em." [12a, c, d]

"What are the conjures made of?" we wanted to know.

"Dey make em uh haiah an nails an frum lots uh tings," we were told.[10]

Elizabeth said, "Duh heabiest root I ebuh heard bout wuz a cunjuh made uh some funny oily stuff in a bottle. Duh enemy ketch duh pusson's spirit in dat bottle an dat wuz a

* *Mary Stevens, Sunbury.*

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"She come frum Africa an uh name wuz Patience Spaulding," he began. "She tell me dat in Africa she use tuh eat wile tings. I membuh she use tuh go out in duh woods roun yuh an bring back some kine uh weed wut she cook. She call it 'lam quato.' It look lak pokeberry tuh me.

"She say all duh people in Africa loves red. Das how dey ketch um. I mean duh folks wut bring um yuh as slabes. Dey put up a red clawt weah dey would see it. Wen dey git close tuh duh boat, dey grab um an bring um yuh. She say das duh way dey ketch huh.

"Wen muh gran pray, she kneel down on duh flo. She bow uh head down tree time an she say 'Ameen, Ameen, Ameen.'

"Muh gran say deah wuz lots uh cunjuh in Africa. Deah wuz some men wut could make a pot bile widout fyuh an deah wuz some wut could fly.[68, 69c] She tell me dat deah wuz witches wut rode folks.[69] Dey could take off deah skins an hang um up an go out as cats.[68] Wen dey come back duh nex mawnin, dey would put on duh skins. Deah is folks roun heah tuhday wut says dey caahn sleep nights cuz duh witches ride um.

"Folks say duh road tuh Maringo is hanted.[59] I use tuh lib at Maringo some time back, but I nebuh did see no spirits. Once I tink I see one. Wen I git closuh, it tun out tuh be a big dog."[54]

Later that day we stopped at a neat whitewashed cottage and talked for a while with Isaac Basden,* a blind basket-maker[70a] about sixty years of age. The old man had learned his trade during his youth before he had gone blind and now supported himself comfortably in this manner.

We found him sitting in the front room, surrounded by his work. A number of finished baskets were also in evidence. They varied widely in size and shape and were all of the coil type.[70i] Many were fanners, while there were also a number

* *Isaac Basden, Harris Neck.*

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285 of large round baskets, about twenty inches in diameter, with matching covers that fitted well down over the rim. Isaac used bulrushes and grasses for his material and worked with a sure deft touch that insured sturdy construction.

533 He remembered that drums had been used for a variety of
534 purposes during his youth. He said, "I use tuh dance tuh duh drum.[23] I recall wen dey beat duh drum tuh call duh
[202] people on Harris Neck tuhgedduh fuh a dance aw fewnul.[26] Cose, dey hab a diffunt beat wen dey call um tuh a settin-up aw fewnul frum duh one dey use tuh call um tuh a dance.
534 Deah wuz two kine uh drum. One dey call duh kittle drum, an one wuz duh bass drum. It stan bout two an a half foot
764 high. Dey use tuh alluz hab a settin-up wen somebody die. Wen folks would go tuh duh settin-up, dey would gib um bread an coffee.[37b, c]

795 "Dey still hole ribbuh baptisms yuh. Dey git tuh duh
796 ribbuh an attuh dey pray an sing up on duh bank, duh preachuh take duh candidates down in duh ribbuh. Fo he
[782] baptize each ub um, he say a prayuh tuh duh ribbuh an ax fuh all duh sins tuh be wash away."[63]

775 Remembering what we had been told about the haunted road to Maringo, we questioned Isaac and he said, "Yes'm, I hab heah bout duh hanted road tuh Maringo on duh Young Man Road. Lots uh folks say deah is spirits roun deah.[59] Wen yuh try tuh pass duh fawk in duh road, duh spirits stop yuh sometime an wohn let yuh by. Some uh duh spirits mus be good, fuh Ise heahd one story bout a man who wuz passin by an all ub a sudden his hawse jis stop shawt in his tracks. Jis wouldn go anudduh step. Duh man try an try, but he couldn make duh hawse moob. Den he see a spirit come long an it take hole ub duh hawse bridle an lead him long. Duh hawse go right long. Den duh spirit disappeah. I hab heahd lots uh stories bout dat road but uh nebuh see nuttn muhsef."

115 Our next interview was an unusually delightful one. Sit-

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ting on the front porch of Liza Basden's * small, compactly constructed brown house, we listened to her comments about the prevailing beliefs and customs. The scene before us was restful. The garden planted at the sides and front of the house was enclosed by a low wire fence. Within this enclosure a number of dogs and chickens scuttled about. At a short distance from the house stood an iron pump and an immense rusted iron pot, probably used in the past for boiling clothes. On all sides as far as the eye could see were vast stretches of green land, shaded by massive-trunked, moss-draped trees and covered with an abundance of semi-tropical foliage and underbrush. Here and there could be glimpsed the slanting roofs of neighboring houses.

When we first arrived Liza, a pretty golden-skinned, rather heavy-set woman about eighty years of age, and a small black grandchild were the only occupants of the porch. She told us she had recently come home from a visit to children in the North. Presently her husband and a daughter approached without speaking and sat down unobtrusively in a corner. For the most part they listened to the conversation, contributing only an occasional remark.

"I wuz bawn with a caul," Liza told us, pausing in her task of peeling and eating figs from the pan that she held in her lap. "That means I see ghos.[4] Least I could see em till aftuh I stop havin chillun. Then I stop seein em.

"Three of my chillun they bawn with cauls too. They wuz always skedduh than othuhs. They wuz always fraid of the dahk an nevuh lak tuh go off by themselfs. I nevuh know jis wut they see."

"What did the ghost that you saw look like?" we inquired. A reflective expression crossed Liza's round pleasant face and she nodded her gray head with its neatly pinned braids.

"They peah jis as nachral as anybody. Most of em ain got no heads. Jis go right-along down the path.[59] One time

* *Liza Basden, Harris Neck.*

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I see a man go right down that path theah. I go out tuh see who he wuz an all of a sudden he disappeah. Theah wuzn't no foot tracks aw nuthin. I nevuh see im no mo. I think maybe he wuz gahdin buried treasure.[51]

"Anothuh time I look out in the yahd an theah wuz a hawg jis a eatin up the cawn.[54b] That wuz the biggest hawg I evuh did see. He stand theah an keep eatin an eatin. I run an tell muh huzbun an he drop wut he wuz doin an come runnin. Wen we git theah, the hawg done disappeah. Theah wuzn't no sign of im an the cawn wuz all right theah. It didn't look lak anybody bin eatin on it uhtall.

"Then one time I see a crowd of cows in the field.[54b] Theah wuz a big bull in the middle. They wuz jis a cuttin down the cawn. Theah wuz a big empty space weah they have already eat. I run tuh weah muh brothuh wuz an tell im tuh come quick. We run weah the cows wuz but wen we git theah, they have all vanished. They wuz all gone. Theah wuz no tracks an all the cawn wuz grown back. All of a sudden I feel a terrible pain. I could hahdly git tuh the house. That's the way it is bout the spirits. Ef yuh tell yuh see em an they disappeah an no one else can see em, then it cause yuh tuh git sick."

After a while Liza remembered an incident that had been related to her by her grandfather and she told us, "Muh gran, he see a deah come down the bluff. He run quick an jump on his back. The deah run all aroun the woods. He teah an scratch an try tuh shake muh gran off. He couldn do it. Finally he run intuh the rivuh. Muh gran jump off an make it tuh the sho. He wuz so tired he wuz mos dead."

Was there no protection against the visits of these creatures from the spirit world, we wanted to know. All of the little group assembled on the porch shook their heads and mumbled a reply.

"Yes'm, mos of the folks carry sumpm fuh pruhtection,"[8] said Liza. "These keep othuh folks frum wukin cun-

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early days, but her memory was rather clouded. She answered pleasantly, however, and when she was not talking to us mumbled softly to herself.

"I do know dat folks bawn wid a caul kin see spirits," [4] she admitted. "Plenty uh folks roun yuh say duh spirits peah tuh um." [59]

When we inquired about drums being beaten at funerals, she shook her head stubbornly and refused to say anything on the subject.

The daughter, overhearing the conversation, paused in her task of ironing, and said, "Yes'm. Dasso. They beats the drum tuhday at the fewnul.[24] Specially ef yuh blongs tuh a awganization, they goes right along in the fewnul pruhcession an beats the drum as they mahch. I remembuh heahin bout in the ole days they beat out messages on the drum.[26] Let the folks know wen sumpm wuz bout tuh happen. Wen they give a dance ovuh on St. Catherine, they beat the drum tuh let the folks heah know bout it."

At a funeral, the bottles and dishes and other possessions belonging to the departed person were left on the grave, the women informed us. "The spirit need these," [47] the younger woman explained, "jis lak wen they's live. Evrybody mahch roun the grave in a succle an shout an pray."

We inquired if some people in the section were afraid to eat certain foods. Once more Josephine shook her head in negation.

The obliging daughter who listened intently to everything that was said again interceded. "I do heah bout that. Theah is some folks wut caahn eat suttn foods. They say it's bad luck an they nevuh do eat it. Right now theah's lots of foods wut some folks dohn eat." [65]

At this point in the conversation the older woman brightened and told us about the harvest festivals held during plantation days.

"We hab big feas. Ebrybody bring some ub duh fus

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crops. We all gib tanks fuh duh crop an we dance an sing." [38]

Shortly after this she again fell to mumbling and muttering unintelligibly and seemed unwilling to be drawn again into the conversation. She did confide in us that she had lived in her house for over fifty-eight years and she proudly displayed her immaculate blue outfit which she said her daughter had recently purchased for her. As it was growing late and we had other interviews to obtain in the vicinity, we concluded our visit. The two women urged us to return soon. Setting out again to make an uncertain jagged path across the field, we looked back and saw Josephine, a rather tragic tall figure huddled at the end of the porch. The daughter waved gaily. Her gold earrings glinted in the sun.

When we found Anna Johnson,* she was standing in the front yard of Ed Thorpe's talking with a tall middle-aged woman who, we later learned, was Rosa Sallins,** her niece and Liza Basden's daughter.

The two women walked over to the car and greeted us. We inquired about the various methods the midwife employed and she said, "Tuh cut a pain yuh use a shahp instrument, lak a knife, aw a peah of sizzuhs. Yuh put it unduh duh pilluh on duh bed. Duh pusson who is sick musn see yuh do it aw it wohn wuk. Sometime yuh use a smoothin ion. Dat cut duh pain too." [125]

Rosa, who had been rather impatiently waiting an opportunity to speak, now offered, "Lots ub duh chillun bawn wid a caul. Ef dey is bawn wid a caul, dey kin see spirits." [4]

The midwife looked solemn. "Folks hab tuh be mighty keahful wen duh chile is bawn lak dat. Ef dey dohn do sumpm bout it, duh chile will be hanted all its life. It'll alluz be fraid uh ghos." [59]

* *Anna Johnson, Harris Neck.*
** *Rosa Sallins, Harris Neck.*

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"What can be done so that the child won't be haunted?" we asked.

"Dey dry duh caul an make a tea out ub it an hab duh chile drink it.[8] Den all duh ebil will disappeah. Duh chile will see ghos, but dey will nebuh hahm um an he wohn be afraid ub um."

Rosa exposed her large white teeth in a broad smile. "I wuz bawn wid teet. Had two front teet wen I wuz bawn."[66]

Neither Rosa nor the midwife knew the significance of this unusual occurrence, though both women thought it was probably a good luck sign.

Anna was reminded of some old remedies that she had found beneficial to teething babies. "Yuh take a alligatuh tusk an clean it an shine it an hang it roun duh neck uh duh chile," she explained. "Den yuh kin take duh foot ub a groun mole. I fuhgits wich one it is. Wich is it, Rosa?"

"Dohn mattuh wich one it is jis so long its duh foefoot."

"Yuh dry it, put it in a sack made out ub a new piece uh clawt an hang it roun duh baby's neck.[8, 12] Sho heps wid duh teethin. I knows plenty bout cuos lak dat," she concluded. "I ain lak deze root folks, dough, das alluz fixin people."

Rosa agreed with her aunt. "Sho is plenty rootin yuh. It goin on all duh time. Deah's plenty uh root people wut is alluz wukin gense folks."[15]

"Dey git a grudge gense yuh an put down sumpm fuh yuh," supplemented Anna, "an pretty soon yuh dohn know yuh ownsef."

"Sometime dey put it in yuh food," this from Rosa again. "Ef yuh got a enemy, yuh dohn dare eat wut yuh lak. Nebuh know wen deah's sumpm in duh food, an ef deah is, yuh sho wohn las. Cose ef yuh weahs a han, it'll wahn yuh an keep duh cunjuh frum wukkin.[12a, c, d] Lots uh folks carries some kine uh chahm all duh time."[8]

"Some uh our folks yuh keep frizzle chicken. Dey dig up

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she declared. "I buns it so nobody kin wuk hahm wid it." [10]

Young Reuben spoke up. "Ef yuh weahs a silvuh coin, it brings yuh good luck," he stated doggedly. "An ef any body cunjuh yuh aw wuk gense yuh, duh money tun black an yuh know yuh hab tuh do sumpm bout it fo duh cunjuh wuks." [12a, c, d]

"Did you ever see anyone who was conjured?" we asked. All three nodded solemnly.

Uncle Ben spoke first. "Dey's mosly all crippled up an caahn moob bout. Ef dey dohn do nuttn, duh cunjuh gits wus an dey dies." [15]

"Folks wut is cunjuhed hab snakes in em an sometimes frawgs.[5] Yuh kin see em moobin roun in deah bodies," volunteered Reuben. "Wen dey visit duh root doctuh [48] an he wuks obuh em, den dey's jis as good as noo."

"Some folks roun bout say dey sees spirits," added Uncle Ben. "Dey calls em plat-eye, cuz dey hab jis one big eye hangin out in front.[62] I dohn fool roun wid sech tings fuh dey's sho bad luck."

"In some places the people told us that dead people's spirits returned to earth. Is that true here?" we asked.

Aunt Sarah speculated. She wagged her black-bonneted head until her brass earrings jangled. Finally she offered, "I dohn guess yuh be bodduh much by duh spirits ef yuh gib em a good fewnul [36] an put duh tings wut belong tuh em on top uh duh grave." [47]

Uncle Ben helped with this explanation. "Yuh puts all duh tings wut dey use las, lak duh dishes an duh medicine bottle. Duh spirits need deze same as duh man. Den duh spirit res an dohn wanduh bout."

Aunt Sarah said that they went to set-ups and that in the old days, after the mourners had arrived, a chicken was killed.[35, 37b, c] Neither Aunt Sarah nor Uncle Ben, however, knew the reason for this.

Catching sight of a few crudely made farm implements

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hollowed-out log set on legs served as a watering trough for the ox.

Susan told us about the death of her mother, Rachel La Conte, who had come from Liberty County. "She die right in dis house. Dey measure uh wid a string. Dey beat duh drum tuh tell ebrybody bout duh settin-up.[26] We all set up wid duh body. We hab a big wash pot full uh coffee an hab a big sack uh soda crackuh fuh duh folks.[27a, b] Ebrybody place dey han bery light on uh eahs an on uh nose an den dey say, 'Dohn call me. I ain ready fuh tuh go yit.'[30, 31]

"We bury uh by tawch light attuh dahk. Ebrybody mahch roun duh grabe in a succle. Ebry night attuh duh fewnul I put food on duh poach fuh duh spirit tuh come git it.[56, 58]

"In duh ole days dey beat duh drum tuh call duh people tuh duh fewnul.[24] Dey beat it slow—boom—boom—boom. Wen dey wannuh stuhrup duh folks fuh a dance aw frolic, dey beats duh drum fas. Den dey knows it ain fuh no fewnul an dat it's fuh a good time. Duh people neahby, wen dey heahs it, beats deah drum an das how dey sends a message so udduh folks gits it.[26]

"I kin membuh two kine uh drum. Deah wuz duh lill kittle drum. Hit wuz bout fifteen inches cross an trēe an a half foot high. Dat wuz duh drum dey beat fuh a settin-up."

Susan, too, gave us a description of the river baptisms. "Dey baptize in duh watuh down at duh landin. All duh candidates is dressed in wite. Dey all confess deah sins an say dey want tuh be save.

"We all mahch long in a line an sing an pray. Wen we git tuh duh ribbuh bank, we stop an duh preachuh say a long prayuh tuh duh Lawd. Den duh preachuh take duh candidates one by one and dey go down in duh ribbuh. Duh preachuh he say a prayuh tuh duh ribbuh. Dey alluz bap-

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115 longs tuh Huger Barrett an Ise one uh duh bes fiel hans on
567 Picayune Plantation."

We interrupted the old woman's reminiscences about
764 plantation days to question her about funeral customs.

"We didn alluz hab too much time fuh big fewnul in dem
[567] days cuz deah wuz wuk tuh be done an ef yuh ain do yuh wuk, yuh git whipped. Lots uh time dey jis dig a hole in duh groun an put duh body in it, but wenebuh we kin, we hab a settin-up."

We asked Aunty Jane if they used to provide plenty of food for the mourners.

"Yes'm, dey sho did hab regluh feastes in dem days, but
[178] tuhday, at mos settin-ups, yuh dohn git nuttn but coffee an bread.[37a, c] Den dey would cook a regluh meal an dey would kill a chicken in front uh duh doe, wring he neck an cook um
[782] fuh duh feas.[35c] Den wen we all finish, we take wut victuals
[775] lef an put it in a dish by duh chimley an das fuh duh sperrit tuh hab a las good meal.[58] We cubbuh up duh dish an deah's many a time Ise heah dat sperrit lif um. We ain preach duh suhmon wen we bury um but we waits a wile so's all duh relations kin come."

"Is it bad luck to steal from a grave?" we wanted to know.
[777] "Bad luck?" repeated Aunty Jane. "Sho it bad luck.
[782] Dem dishes an bottles wut put on duh grabe is fuh duh sper-
[775] rit an it ain fuh nobody tuh tech um.[64] Das fuh duh sperrit tuh feel at home.[47] Wen he die fah off, we bring um home tuh bury um, dohn leh no strainjuh be bury wid um. Yuh gib people wut ain belong tuh yuh anudduh piece uh groun tuh be bury in.[3] We alluz hab two fewnul fuh duh pusson. We hab duh regluh fewnul wen yuh die. Den once a yeah we
[769] hab one big preachin fuh ebrybody wut die dat yeah."[43]

754 Aunty Jane looked up slyly when we asked her if she believed in conjure.

"I ain belieb in um muhsef but deah's plenty wut do. Ise had Ellen Hammond libin wid me. She die las yeah. She sho

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yuh all duh time an wistle jis lak a pusson. I dohn fool wid no spiduh. Dey is bad luck. All duh time dey drop down right out ub a tree.

"I know deah is spirits an ghos cuz I kin see um.[59] Yuh hab tuh be bawn wid a caul tuh be able tuh see duh spirits.[4]

"Some uh duh folks is rid so much by witches dat attuh a time dey git tin an po an jis die.[69] Wen a witch come in duh house, it hang up duh skin behine duh doe an ef yuh put salt on duh skin, duh witch caahn put it on agen. Benne seed is bad fuh duh witch too an keep um way.

"Witches take all kine uh shape. Sometime dey lak animal, sometime lak bud.[68] In Harris Neck deah wuz a big buzzud wut use tuh light on duh fence ebry time dey would be milkin duh cows. Wen duh buzzud would fly off, one uh duh milk buckets would alluz be dry.[69c] Dis happen ebry day. Dey would shoot at duh bud but nobody could ebuh hit it. One man he take a dime an he quawtuh it; den he put it in duh gun. Duh nex day wen duh buzzud light, he shoot at it an he hit it in duh wing. It fly off an go down a chimbley ub a house. Wen duh men go in duh house, dey fine a ole uhmun wid uh ahm broke. Dey know den she wuz a witch. I know deah wuz some talk bout bunnin uh up, but I dohn tink dey do it.

"Ebry night I sit on dis poach heah." He pointed to the back porch of the white house. "I kin see duh spirits goin by. Deah is a whole crowd uh lill wite tings. Dey is goin obuh deah tuh duh spring. Some is lak chillun; some is lak grown folks. Dey jis go cross duh fiel tuh duh mahble steps uh duh ole gahden an down duh steps tuh duh fountn. I ain nebuh bodduh um an dey ain nebuh do me no hahm."

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764 "Yes'm, we hab set-ups wid duh dead, but I ain know bout killin chicken. At duh fewnul, dey kills hawg an hab[40] plenty tuh eat.[37b, c] Duh reason fuh dis is so dat sperrit hab plenty at duh las. Wen fewnul pruhcession gits tuh grabe-yahd, dey stops. I ain know wy dey do it but dey stops at duh gate, and dey ax leab tuh come in. Deah ain nobody at duh gate, but dey alluz ax jis duh same. Dey say, 'Fambly, we come tuh put our brudduh away in mudduh dus. Please leh us go tru gate.' "[60]

764 782

[775]

754 About conjure, however, the old woman was not very communicative. "I ain know bout cunjuh," she said. "I heahs bout spells on people, but I ain see um. Now shadduhs, I see um. One night comin down duh road, I git tuh place weah road tun, an I heah sumpm behine me runnin long close tuh groun. He got big long tus, dis long, an he tongue hangin out. He pas close tuh me, an he look a me. I see um good. He got long tick haiah lak Noofounlan. Deah ain nebuh bin dog lak um on ilun. He mus be shadduh.[54]

796 787

"Den one night, I come frum chuch wid huzbun. We gits tuh tun, I heahs sumpm agen. I looks, an deah is sumpm look lak man. Huzbun he ain see um. Den I heahs a stompin, an sumpm come by so close tuh me I kin mos tech um, an he tun tuh spotted ox. 'Budge,' I calls um wen dey changes lak dat. Dat spotted ox go gallopin off, an I say tuh huzbun, 'Yuh ain see um?' He say, 'Wut?' I say, 'Da spotted ox wut go pas down duh road an out in da fiel?' He say, 'I ain see nuttn.' Das wen I luns dat wen yuh see um, yuh musn talk bout um.

539 "No'm, I dunno no animal stories. I heah um, but I fuh-gits. I know bout lizzud an rabbit, dough. Yuh ain know bout lizzud an rabbit? Well, lizzud, he wuk hahd. He hab sode wut he cut crop wid, an it wuk by itsef an it cut so fine, nuttn lef.[39] Lizzud he speak wuds tuh it—it do all duh wuk. Now, rabbit, he smaht. He ain got no sode lak lizzud got an he wahn one. He hide behine bush, an he watch da sode

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the current belief concerning the necessity of asking leave to enter the graveyard.

"Grant Johnson, he wannuh cut some wood an he git obuh duh fence uh duh cimiterry," he explained to us. "He didn ax leab uh nobody.[50] He wuz a cuttin duh wood down as fas as he could wen all ub a sudden he see a big black dog wut[54] come attuh im. Dat wuz a shadduh an he ain lose no time in jumpin obuh duh fence.

"Wen yuh hab a fewnul eben today, yuh hab tuh ax leab tuh entuh duh cimiterry gate. Duh spirit ain gonuh let yuh in lessn yuh ask leab ub it."

We visited Nero Jones,* an elderly Negro who lived on his sixty-five-acre tract of land with a daughter, Henrietta. Sitting beneath the protecting shade of an arbor which overlooked a peanut field, the old man was busily engaged in shucking a large basket of the nuts.

He, too, remembered having seen harvest dances. "We use tuh hab big time at hahves,"[33] he began. "We pray an sing duh night tru. Wen duh sun riz we go out an dance. We hab big beatin uh drums an sometimes we dry duh goads an leab duh seed in um. Dey make good rattle.[23, 25]

"I membuh Uncle Calina an An Hannah well. Dey mighty ole an dey bun up in duh house. Day talk lot uh funny talk tuh each udduh an dey is mighty puhticuluh bout prayin. Dey pray on duh bead. Duh ole man he say 'Ameela' and An Hannah she say 'Hakabara.'"

Later we drove slowly over the flat grass-lands to Hog Hammock, another Negro community at the south end of Sapelo. The red-legged herons winging their way against the vivid blue of the sky, the dense foliage rimming the edges of the inland marshes, clumps of feathery bush, all contributed to the tropical beauty of the island.

At Hog Hammock we visited Shad Hall (Plate XVII),** A

* *Nero Jones, Sapelo Island.*
** *Shad Hall, Sapelo Island.*

A, [See Category 142, plate following p. xxxii-V--Analyst]

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829 house. Dey sleep on hahd groun inside house. House wuz neah lill ilun weah dey ketch parrot and sell um."

"Do you remember any special kinds of food that your grandmother used to prepare?" we asked.

829 252 Shad, after pondering briefly, said, "She make strange cake, fus ub ebry munt. She call it 'saraka.' She make it out uh meal an honey. She put meal in bilin watuh an take it right out. Den she mix it wid honey, and make it in flat cakes. Sometime she make it out uh rice. Duh cake made, she call us all in an deah she hab great big fannuh full an she gib us each cake. Den we all stands roun table, and she says, 'Ameen, Ameen, Ameen,' an we all eats cake."

829 We asked Shad what sort of animals his grandmother remembered seeing in Africa, and he said, "She say lion is duh mos powful uh beas. She say lion git up tree jis lak cat. Yuh come long unduh tree, an lion he reach down wid great paws an grab yuh—so. Snakes, dey big, too. Dey wrap deah tail roun tree an lean obuh an reach yuh, too."

829 764 • 795 789 231 Shad furnished us additional information regarding "set-ups." "Yes'm, Gran Hestuh tell me uh set-ups. Dey kill a wite chicken wen dey hab set-ups tuh keep duh spirits way. She say a wite chicken is duh only ting dat will keep duh spirits way an she alluz keep wite chicken fuh dat in yahd." Lak dis. Hestuh, she hab frien an frien die. Ebry ebenin friens spirit come back an call tuh Hestuh.[56] Hestuh knowd ef she keep it up, she die too. Hestuh den kills wite chicken, tro it out uh doze, an shut doe quick. Wen she tro it out, she say, 'Heah, spirit, moob away—dohn come back no mo.' I dunno wut she do wid duh blood an fedduhs.

754 "Yes'm, I heah tell uh witches, but I ain see um. I know eel skin tie roun neck bring good luck an cuo yuh ef yuh sick. Yes'm, I see um bury sack unduh doe step tuh [11] pruhtec house; I see um tie rag tuh gate tuh pruhtec too.[11b, c] I ain know snake-skin bring good luck, but eel-skin, yes'm.

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754 "Yuh ain heah so much bout cunjuh on dis ilun, but deah's a few wut does a mighty lot uh talkin. Nellie Dixon, she lib right obuh deah in dem trees, she alluz talkin bout roots. She say somebody go tru duh yahd an drap a root fuhrum. She tote a sack roun uh neck tuh gahd um." [8, 12a, c, d]

115 567 When asked to whom he had belonged during slavery he answered, "Muh fus massuh Montally. He ole massuh. Young massuh wuz Massuh Tom Spalding. Den I belongs tuh Mike Spalding; dat befo freedom. Sometime duh ole folks call duh missus 'maduba' an duh massuh 'mahaba.' Yes'm I bin big man wen freedom come."

529 Shad remembered that during his childhood he had often witnessed harvest festivals and dances.

"Hahves time dey hab big time. It come once a yeah an dey pray an dey sing all night long till duh fus cock crow. Den dey staht tuh dance an tuh bow tuh duh sun as it riz in duh sky. Dey dance roun in a succle an sing an shout. Sho is a big time.[38]

764 782 "Wen yuh hab a buryin, yuh alluz hab tuh ask leab tuh duh grabeyahd. Dey do dat tuh dis day. Yuh say, 'Fambly, please let us lay yuh brudduh in mudduh dus.' " [60]

764 313 782 • 775 The story which Cuffy Wilson had already told us about Grant Johnson's having been chased from the graveyard by a shadow was also verified from this source. Shad told us, "Grant Johnson he go deah one time tuh cut wood widout askin leab. He busy cuttin wood wen all ub a sudden he see big black dog comin tuh um wid one paw raise an red eye an big grinnin teet.[54] Grant he ain lose no time in gittin way. Dat dog wuz shadduh wut come attuh um.

829 789 "Duh ole folks use tuh tell dat story bout duh hoe wut could wuk by itsef. It stan right up in duh fiel widout nobody holdin tuh it.[39] Das ef yuh knowd how tuh wuk it. Doze Africans knowd how tuh make dat hoe wuk an dey knowd how tuh wuk roots.

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796 533 singing was enhanced by the fervor and the earnest simplicity with which it was presented. Shining countenances raised heavenward, voices lifted exultantly, and feet beating rhythmically in accompaniment, the congregation entered wholeheartedly into the singing and seemed oblivious of everything else.

538 The next day on the boat returning to the mainland, Smith, young and well educated, tried to remember some of the tales told him when he was a boy. They were mostly the better known ones, except the Fox and the Rabbit, which concerned the Fox thriftily planting sweet potatoes and the Rabbit digging them up.

763 825 789 Prevalent beliefs covered wider ground. If an owl hoots on top of the house or near the house, it is supposed to be a sign of death.[44] A counteractive is to throw salt on the fire, burn an old shoe, or turn pockets wrong side out. If a rooster comes upon the porch and starts crowing, it is a sign of death in the house.[13b] It is also considered bad luck 484 to start on a journey and have to turn back. The method 799 789 employed to ward off disaster is to draw a cross where you turned back and spit on it. We were told that most of the 759 island Negroes believed in root doctors, but that they imported them from the mainland. There were none on the island.

• 795 Smith admitted that he knew very little about the Negroes' belief in spirits. He did know that if a person had something that the spirit wanted very badly that person would be haunted by the spirit.

231 825 A frizzled chicken is known as a wise chicken and is used to find lost articles. If something has been buried and its place forgotten, a frizzled chicken can, according to the islanders, find the place and scratch up the lost article.[13a]

821 796 Smith remembered hearing the older Negroes tell of having watches on certain definite occasions when they sat up all night waiting for sunrise. When the sun at last appeared

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We asked Uncle Jim if he could see spirits. "No'm, I ain nevuh seen em. I wuzn bawn with a caul [4] an I caahn see em. Now, muh brothuh he kin see em cuz he wuz bawn with a caul. He see em all the time. Spirits is alluz roun in time of fewnuls an wen a pusson die, we have a settin-up and then we leave sumpm wut we got tuh eat in a dish by him to eat [54] —that is, we use tuh do that—an we put salt on em in the ole days an we go up to em an we put our hands on theah chest to bid em feahwell." [31]

We asked Uncle Jim if they used to have night funerals in the old days. "No'm, we alluz have our fewnuls in the day time but my great granmothuh, now, she say in Africa they have night fewnuls."

We asked him to tell us more of his African great grandmother.

"Muh great gran, huh name wuz Bina; thas all we know uh by. She brought up muh mothuh cuz muh gran got bun up in uh house wen muh mothuh wuz two days ole."

We asked him if he remembered her well. "Yes'm, I wuz a big boy about fifteen wen she die an they all say she wuz a hundud an thutty yeahs ole at that time. She sho ole, I know dat, but she remembuh plenty. She tell us chillun so much I caahn remembuh all them things."

We asked again about night funerals. "She jis say they have em at night but she didn say wy. She did say they alluz kill a wite chicken at the time they go to bury em an they take the blood an feathuhs an they do sumpm special with em but I ain unduhstood how it is.[35a, b] I tell you wut she tell me, how she get heah on a big boat an she lan down theah on Cumberland Ilun on a big dock in the time of Mr. Nightingale an she say they put em in a lill pick house to keep em safe an the chimbly of that same lill house is standin about two hundud yahds out in the rivuh off Cumberland tuhday."

We asked if she had told him how they lived in Africa

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ally for St. Anthony; that same St. Anthony who, it will be recalled, is the *loa* named Legba, the guardian of all entrances."
Life in a Haitian Valley, p. 286.

61. *Spirit, guardian of buried treasure*

a *Herskovits says of Haiti:* "*Baka* are often employed to guard buried money. 'In this country, when you find money buried in jars, it is an affair of *baka*. There is never one jar, but always two or three, and you must call a *hungan* to find out which one you may take and which you must not touch. Generally the finder is allowed to take half of the treasure, for if he took all he would be tormented by the *baka* who had been left as guardian. Such jars, it is said, are usually found with human bones beside them or under them, and tradition has it that the slave-owners who are believed to have been strong in magic customarily killed the most evil slave on a plantation that his spirit might keep watch over the jars. If the owner never returned, the spirit of the slave, as a 'sold *baka*,' remained to wreak vengeance upon anyone who dared disturb his charge."
Life in a Haitian Valley, pp. 242–43.

62. *Spirits, plat-eye*

[775]

a *Johnson says of St. Helena:* "In the Georgetown section plat-eye is used to signify a ghost or spook. Its etymology is uncertain, and it may be an instance of an Africanism surviving in a restricted area."
Folk Culture on St. Helena Island, South Carolina, p. 58.

b *Nassau says of West Africa:* "Another manifestation is that of the uvengwa. . . . It is the self-resurrected spirit and body of a dead human being. It is an object of dread, and is never worshipped in any manner whatever. Why it appears is not known. Perhaps it shows itself only in a restless, unquiet, or dissatisfied feeling. It is white in color, but the body is variously changed from the likeness of the original human body. Some say that it has only one eye, placed

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Children are expected from Sea Island marriages, whether they are the couple's own or just living with them. Children are highly prized regardless of the financial condition of the parents, and abortion is rare and generally viewed as an abomination against God and nature. If a young couple joins a parent's household, rather than establishing a new one, the elder members of the family usually take responsibility for the care and discipline of the children. Many elderly residents, the guardians of several generations of children, attribute their longevity and good health to the belief that they *cannot* die until all the children for whom they are responsible are grown and able to care for themselves, or until their responsibilities are delegated to someone else. Some children are reared by sisters, aunts, uncles, or even distant cousins. It is not unusual for a child to reach adulthood living not more than a block from the natural parent but residing with another relative, who is perhaps childless or more financially secure. Even children born out of wedlock generally know who their fathers and grandparents are. These children are given the same respect in the community as legitimate children and are as likely to be reared by the paternal side of the family as by the maternal side.[45]

The church is probably the most important social organization in the Sea Island communities. Outwardly, the Sunday services follow the patterns prescribed for Baptist and Methodist churches and are thus based on Christian doctrine. Some of the beliefs of black Christians in the Sea Islands are quite distinctive. For example, I have heard many elderly residents speak of a tripartite division of the human being into body, soul, and spirit, whereas Christian doctrine teaches that a person has only a body and a soul which is synonymous with the spirit. According to many elderly island residents, when one dies, only the soul returns to the kingdom of God. The body and spirit remain on earth. And although the soul of the dead person cannot harm the living, the spirit can, at will, cause another to harm him- or herself.[46]

This concept of a tripartite body, soul, and spirit, with the body and spirit remaining on earth after death and able to influence the living, is widespread in West Africa today. Many African peoples do not conceive of any geographical separation between the real world and the spirit world; as soon as the body dies physically, they believe the person arrives in the spirit world.[47] To these physical and spiritual entities, some societies add a belief in a "shadow" entity.[48] The Sea

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Islanders have delineated this three-part concept very precisely. It was described to me by a very religious Sea Island man as follows:

> Listen to me good now: when you die in this world, you see, the . . . the . . . the . . . soul of a man go home to the Kingdom of God, but your spirit still's here on earth. . . . And if you was . . . the devil in all your days . . . your spirit, after you dead, your spirit can do the same thing. Your soul up there, but your spirit de right down de here with the body. . . . And that's the one gone . . . gone do the effect to you. You see now . . . now that's, that's why I say this now. A lot of people don't believe. Say, say . . . say is not ghost. Is ghost there.

The "dream spirit," this man continued, must be permitted periodically to take leave of the body and roam. It therefore leaves the body and wanders all over the world when one goes to sleep. The body is unprotected while the spirit is away, however, and if the spirit should come in contact with a second, evil spirit while it is roaming, it must race back to the body. When this happens, the person may cry out in sleep and become frightened; if the spirit does not come back to the body, the person dies in sleep.[49]

Another distinctive element in the islanders' world view is their belief in voodoo, or hoodoo. This belief involves rituals whereby spirits, good or evil, are conjured up to offer predictions, kill enemies, or perform cures for problems ranging from broken hearts, infertility, and rheumatism to mental illness and cancer. The spirit of one's ancestors is considered the closest link to the spirits of the "other" world. Thus, on the Sea Islands as well as in Africa, spirits are asked to intervene on behalf of a living relative. The belief in voodoo is still so strong in the Sea Island area that Dr. Buzzard, a known practitioner of the occult, maintained a high standard of living from reading signs, effecting certain cures, and appealing to the spirits.

The islanders set great store on preparation for burial and consider it an abomination to die without having made the necessary financial arrangements to be buried at home. Thus some islanders pay on burial policies all of their lives. By tradition a parent starts a burial policy for each child that is born, paying twenty-five to fifty cents per month until the policy is paid in full. It may take one's whole life to pay for all the policies. When the children reach a certain age, the parents usually ask

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763 456 them to take over the policies, and the children, knowing the importance of proper burial, usually do so gladly.

764 When an islander has moved away and then died, every possible effort is made to return the body to the island for burial among relatives and friends. The desire to be buried at home is also very common among the Igbo, Yoruba, and other Nigerian peoples, who believe without question that the dead are dependent on their ancestors for spiritual nourishment and thus must be buried among them to find peace.[50] By ongoing tradition, Sea Island burial places are densely wooded and are considered to be the sacred abodes of the spirits.

764 795 A burial tradition once practiced widely on the Sea Islands and in rural areas of the deep South, though it is now dying out, is the placing of articles such as pottery, spoons, dishes, and other items belonging to the deceased person on the grave, in case the deceased might need or want them in afterlife. Even those scholars hesitant to ascribe other practices observed on the islands to African influences have readily accepted the African basis of this tradition.[51] I have seen the same practices among the Igbo and Ibebio, and it was at one time not unusual in West Africa for boxes of the dead person's possessions—clothes, hardware, and crockery, for example—to be laid by the body, which was not interred but left on top of the ground and covered with branches and leaves.[52]

764 On the Sea Islands children's graves were traditionally decorated with favorite toys, broken glasses and cups, and money banks always containing a few pennies. The islanders could not explain why the glasses and cups were broken before they were put on a grave. Some said that it was done to decrease the chance of someone's stealing the items; others commented they were merely copying what they had always seen done. The old customs, however, are now being replaced for both children and adults by the use of fancy headstones and cement vaults, which have come to be thought more prestigious signs of one's love for the deceased person.

Sea Island funerals are often very sad and solemn occasions, but they are also very emotional, as are most of the religious services. People attend a funeral to pay their respects to the deceased, but even more to pay their respects to the deceased's family. Each person is given a funeral as elaborate as the family and friends can make it, and the church is packed as full for the funeral of a young child as it would

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115 God, roots, and life. He was respected in the community and renowned for his knowledge of the Bible and root medicine. He owned a fair amount of land, which he put to good use growing corn, cucumbers, peas, okra, tomatoes, and other vegetables. The only time I ever got to talk with him was late evenings (when the sun "de red for down"), when he would come in from plowing and planting and sit under his big pecan tree to "catch some breeze." On a few occasions his wife, Miss Maime, a small, short-legged, soft-spoken woman, brought his plate out to the pecan tree so that he could eat while he talked to me. His plate had always been set aside and kept warm, and it [262] was indeed tempting, piled high with cowpeas and bone, a good help- [263] ing of corn bread sliced and filled with fresh butter and molasses, [272] onions and tomatoes from the garden, and hot pepper sauce, with penny drink or iced tea served in his own particular glass.

Mr. Hampy was not a lonely man. He had several children and more head of grandchildren than he felt he could keep up with. Mr. Hampy's children who had remained at home had built their houses or set up their trailers so that each shared the communal yard area near his home, as is traditional in Sea Island family communities. Some of his children, including a special daughter, had moved to New York. The [845] daughter was special because she had been born with a caul over her [789] face and was thus thought to have the gift not only to see ghosts, hants, or hags but to be able to know things that other people are not privileged to know. Mr. Hampy himself had been born with a caul, and he 115 was thus able to sympathize with her special sight. In fact, he at- 845 tributed her leaving the island and going to New York in part to her 789 desire for an area where such things as ghosts, hags, and plat-eyes 775 were less prevalent. Because the island roads are densely forested, they are judged natural haunts for the spirits of the dead. Mr. Hampy often amused himself by telling me that if I really wanted to see a ghost, he 115 could show me one any day of the week just after midnight on the road 775 leading to the Presbyterian graveyard. However, we never made that journey after nightfall to see the ghost standing at the entrance to the lane (see Appendix 3).[A]

115 Mr. Hampy told no tales of Ber Rabbit and his witty ways, though 759 he admitted that he knew many of them. His only topics were religious [538] or medicinal. It was from him that I learned many of the Sea Island folk cures. He accompanied me to the wooded area behind his home and pointed out some of the common roots that grow on top of the

A. [For Appendix 3, see Category 775, pp. 158-164--Analyst]

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had often been hospitalized for short periods for her condition. She finally lost the battle or, as some islanders said, she finally won the battle, staked her sword in the golden sand, and went home to the Kingdom of God on 4 July 1984. Mr. Hampy was told, and he died the next day, 5 July. Some said that the couple had been together so long that his spirit had become a part of hers and that when she died, he died simply because he lacked the will to live without her. Others commented that since her body remained warm so long after her death, she was waiting for him to follow.

Their funeral was one of the most elaborate I have seen in the Sea Island area. The cost was well in excess of fifteen thousand dollars, a total which the couple had prepared for over the years by paying on their funeral policy. They had matching blue caskets with intricate gold designs. Hers was covered with a spread of pink flowers, his with a spread of blue ones. The undertaker was careful with such details as having her coffin brought in first and stationing her coffin to the left of his. These were things that the viewers would observe and remember when they selected someone to handle their own funeral arrangements.

The Presbyterian church was packed beyond capacity, and I stood outside the door of the church along with other friends hoping to see the couple one last time. Two male associates had accompanied me to the funeral and stood among the other men on the church ground, chatting. As a female, I knew that I was not permitted this liberty. Women do not stand outside the church and chat when services are going on. If they cannot get inside the church, they stand as close to it as possible or remain in their cars. In a break with custom, the caskets were not opened for viewing the bodies; I walked with others more than two miles up a long, narrow, muddy lane to the gravesite, still hoping to see their faces. However, before I made it up the lane, they had passed the younger children over the caskets to prevent their spirits from being "touched" by the spirits of the dead. As is traditional, they buried Mr. Hampy and Miss Maime side by side, she on his left, in a densely wooded area to help enclose their spirits. Each grave was covered with flowers and clocks were set at the time each one died.

193 (3 ∅ n) third-person neuter nominative
539 (3 ♂ o) third-person masculine objective
539 (3 ♀ o) third-person feminine objective
128 (3 ∅ o) third-person neuter objective

(PrC)	present continuative	/də/
(PaC)	past	/bɪnə/
(T)	tense indicator	/bɪn/
(L)	locative	/də/

539 di soəl ɛn di speɪt

715 1. lɪsn mi gʊd nɔu / βɛn ju daɪ nɪs wɔ̈l / jusi / dɪ dɪ dɪ so·əl
Listen me good now: when you die in-this world, you see, the, the, the soul

19 2. əβə män go fiom dʊ di kɪŋdəm ə gɔd / bɔt juə speit
of-a man go home to the Kingdom of God, but your spirit

3. stɪls iə ɔn ɔ?t / ɛn ɪɸ ju βədɪ dɛβəl ɪn ɒl juə diez /
still's here on earth. And if you was-the devil in all your days,

4. juə speit /ätə ju died / joə speit kə du di siem tiŋ / juə speit
your spirit, after you dead, your spirit can do the same thing, your spirit.

5. juə soəl ɔ̈p dɛ / bɔt juə speit dɛ ɹɛ? dɔŋ də iə βɪd
Your soul up there, but your spirit (L) right down (L) here with

6. di bɒɾi / ɛn däs də wɔn gɔ gɔ du də ɸɛk tu jʊ / ju si nɔ nɔ
the body. And that's the one gone, gone do the effect to you. You see now now

7. das das βɒɪ ɒɪ sie dɪs nɔ / ə lɒs ä̃ pipũ
that's that's why I say this now. A lot of people

8. dõn biliɸ / sie sie sieiz no guos / iz guos dɛə /bɔt nɔ sensz
don't believe. Say say say-is no ghost. Is ghost there. But now since

9. di ?ʊ̃rəmobil n tiŋ kɔm / n gɪt dɪ hɒɪβie nɔ / jusidiz diz tiŋ
the automobile and thing come and get the highway now, you-see-these, these thing

10. käɪnə tɛk tu wʊd / ä̃ɪ mɛmbə wɔnäɪt / βi βi bɪn ɔut
kind-of take to wood. I member one-night we, we (T) out

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11. n di ɹəβə / wɔʰɒnˀ wɔ wɔɪʃɛkɪn ʃiβɪms / ɛnəβɛn ɒɪ lʊk / wɔ õ
in the river, was-hunt, was, was-catching shrimps. And-ah-
12. mɪn mi ɸs̈ kõzn ɹɛɾɔpdil / βi bɪn ɪn kɹɪk / ɛn βɛn ɒɪ lʊk bɛk
me-and me first cousin, right-up-the-hill, we (T) in crick. And when I look back
13. bəˀɒɪn βi / i wz̈ ə kɔɸɔm bɪn bəhɒɪn βi / dɛ nätʃəl
behind we, (3 ø n) was a coffin (T) behind we. The natural-
14. bɔn kɔɸɔm gɛl ʃain dɔŋ dɪ kɹɪk /
born coffin, gal, shine down the crick.
15. ɛn βɛn βɛn i gɛt ɔpə kloə tʊ βi ɸä ju tʊ da kä jõna / i tekˈ
And when, whn, (3 ð n) get up-a close to we far you to the car-yonder, (3 ð n) take
16. daˀma ʃ / ɛn daˀ maʃ bɪnə lie dɔŋ dis / lie dɔŋ dʒɪs lɛk dät /
that-marsh. And that marsh (PaC) lay down just, lay down just like that.
17. ɛn ɒɪ bɪnə sɪɾɔŋ ɛn ɒɪ ẽ nõ ɒɪ bɪnə ɪnəsi / si . . . /
And I (PaC) sit-down and I ain't know I (PaC) in-a-seat. See . . .
18. jie / də nɛ·tʃal kɔɸɪn / də nɛ·tʃəl kɔɸɪn kɔmɪn dɔŋdiɹɪβə / siβɪm
yeah, the natural coffin, the natural coffin coming down-the-river, swim.
19. dasəspeɪt nɔu / jie / kɔmɪn dɔŋ də ɹɪβə / ɛn βɛn / ˀɒˀə βi / dɪsbɔi
That's-a-spirit now. Yeah. Coming down the river. And when—after we, this-boy
20. tɔk βiɾəm / hidis / ɕɪɸ wɔn sɐid oβəndə mäʃ jusi / ɛn hi sitɛt
talk with-(3 ø o), (3 ø n)-just shave one side over-in-the marsh, you-see. And (3 ø n) start
21. tʊ lie da maʃ dɔŋ / ɛn lɛɸ da maʃɛn gönɔpnɪedʒ ədawʊd /
to lay that marsh down, and left that marsh-and gone-up-in-the-edge of-that-wood,
22. ɛn laˀ da wʊd bɪn bɐut ɸɔ ɸɔm βi·z də kɹɪk /
and Lord, that wood (T) about far from we-as the crick.
23. ɛn ju kədə jɛɾi ɔu i kieɔntɔpida ɪn da wʊd /
And you could-have heard how (3 ø n) carry-on-top-of-that, in that wood.

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24. βiel nɔdiztinɪzdɛ nɔ / nɔ ɛβibodi kɛ̃ ɕɔ̈əm /
Well now-these-thing-is-there now. No, everybody can't see-them.

25. bɔt ju gɒt ɸiɬɪn ju ʔkŋ ɕɔ̈əm / βiel ɒɪ ä̈d wɔn dɔɾə . . . no ɒɪ ɦä̈d wɔn dɔɾə /
But you got feeling, you can see-them. Well, I had one daughter, . . . no, I had one daughter

26. ɪnnu jɔk ɻäit nɔu / n hi kʊɾə stɛnɛni iβinɪn / ɛn ʃuə ju /
in-New York right now, and (3 ♀ n) could stand-any evening and show you,

27. n ʃuə ju dɪ dɪ də pɔsn / ŋgə ʃö̞ ju tuəɻi pɔsn / ɕɔ^{ə}m ɹɛit ɕjɒndə
and show you the, the, the person, and-could show you two-three person./ "See-(3 ♂ o) right yonder,

28. dëdɪ də stɛnɔp / ɛn ɒɪ kʊdn ʃɔəm ɸə ɕieβ mɒɪ dɒiŋ lɒiɸ
Daddy, (PrC) stand-up," and I couldn't see-(3 ♂ o) for save my dying life,

29. ɛndä gjɛl bɪn dä βie bɪn dä βie til / dëm tɪŋ justə ɸɹɒɪdem /
and-that gal (T) that way, (T) that way til them thing use-to frightened-(3 ♀ o),

30. ɛn dɛn ɒɪ kiɛm tʊ dɪ / ɒɪ kiɛm
and then I carry-(3 ♀ o) to the, I carry-(3 ♀ o)

31. tə de fiɒsipɪɾɪ / ɛn βɒ nëm pipl du βiɾəm nɛ / ɒɪ dö̞ no /
to the hospital. And what them people do with-(3 ♀ o) there, I don't know.

32. bɔ ɸɔ̈m ɔpdä tɒɪm ɪn ɔpnɔ / ʃi neβə dɪ si nɔn nɔmo / . . .
But from up-that time and up-now, (3 ♀ n) never did see none no-more. . . .

33. hi mɔs bi bɔ̈n βɪd sɔmp ɸə ʃɔəm /
(3 ♀ n) must be born with something for see(3 ø o).

34. ɸə si ʃi kʊɾə ʃɔəm ple·en / juno / iʔ i ʃɔəm nɛ·tʃəl juno /
For see, (3 ♀ n) could see-(3 ø o) (it) plain, you-know, (3 ♀ n), (3 ♀ n) see-(3 ø o) (it) natural, you-know.

35. didɪs də sitanɔpd^{h}ɛi ʃɔ̈m / jie ɛndɛnɒm / βiel ə o əlɒɪsa p^{h}ipl ə
Just-just (PrC) stan-up-there-(3 ♀ n) see-(3 ø o). Yeah. And-then-ah, well, a, oh, a-lot-of people, a,

36. əholɒ·tsa p^{h}ipl jugoβɪdnɔ kɛ̃ ʃɔ̈m / kɛ 'ʃɔ̈mɛn t^{h}ɛ / ju 't^{h}uə /
a-whole-lot-of people you-go-with now can see-(3 ø o), can see-(3 ø o)-and tell you too!

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37. si si da pɔsn jɒna / jieə / jieə /das ɹɛ̈it / jiə ju kʊ
"See, see that person yonder." Yeah, yeah, that's right. Yeah, you could

38. ɸiləm / jiə . . . mū? / das di ol dɛβəl / βiel nɔnɔ / ju no
feel-(ʒ ð o) Yeah . . . muh, that's the old devil. Well now-now, you know

39. βɒɪ ɒɪ tɔk bɔ? sɔ̈mtɐɪm ju go bəjəsɛɸ / ɪɸ ju dis wɒk /
why I talk but sometime you go by-yourself. If you just walk.

40. n sɔ̈mtɐɪm ju ɸɪl 'timəɹɪdʒ / sɔ̈mtɒɪ ju ɸil lɐka ju fiiə /
and sometime you feel timeridge, sometime you feel like your hair

41. lukɪɐi / ju ɸil / ju gɪt 'timə,ɹɪdʒ . . . / das ɹɐit /
look-like you feel you get timeridge . . . that's right.

42. βiel ju si ə / juəspeɪt hɪt da iβəl ɸɛla / ɛn juə speɪt kɔm bɛk tʊjʊ /
Well, you see, ah, your-spirit hit that evil fellow. And your spirit come back to-you.

43. dʒɪs läk ə βɛn ju go ɪn bed dɪ nɐit ɸə silip
Just like a, when you go in bed the night to sleep,

44. βɛnjugoɪnbedinɐit / ɸə tiek ə ɹɛs / βel də speit
when-you-go-in-bed-the-night for take a rest, well, the spirit

45. lɛɸ dɪ bɒɾɪ / si βɛn juə speit lɛɸ dɪ bɒɾl / juə
left the body. See, when your spirit left the body your

46. speit go ɪn dlɸɔ̈n pät ə dɪs kɔntɬi / ɔloβə / ɛn dɛn sɔmtäim
spirit go in different part of this country. All-over. And then sometime

47. βen də fiit dä iβəl speit / βen ju çiəm ɹɔn / kɔm bɛk də ju
when (PrC) hit that evil spirit, when you see-(ʒ ø o) run, come back to you

48. ɛn mɛk ju skie njoə bed / sɔmtɒɪm ju mä? fiɒlə sɐiɾəsɔ̈mlɛkdɛt
and make you scare in-your bed. Sometime you may holler beside-some-like-that.

49. si juo speit kɔm bɛk nju ɸɹäin /
See, your spirit come back an-you frighten.

50. no ju kɛ̃ silip si / ɛn dɛn ju kɛ̃ βiekɔ̃p / dispeit dõ
No, you can't sleep, see, and then you can't wake-up. The-spirit don't

51. kɔ̈m bɛk tʊ jʊ / nɔ ɪɸ də speit dõ kɔm bɛk tʊ jʊ / jʊ nuo ju

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come back to you. Now if the spirit don't come back to you, you know you

52. dɛ / ɪn ɔrə wʊd / ju ẽ die oβə fiɪə / nɔdä tʃuɸ / nɔ /
there. In other word, you ain't there over here. Now-that truth, now.

53. nɔ däs tʃuɸ / ju gɪt dɪ bɒɪbl ɛn ju ɹirəm / däs tʃuɸ /
Now that's truth. You get the Bible and you read-(3 ɸ o). That's truth.

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Listen well now: when you die, you see, the soul of a man goes home to the Kingdom of God, but your spirit remains here on earth. And if you were an evildoer all of your life, then after you die, your spirit can continue doing the same kind of evil. Your soul is in heaven, but your spirit remains here on earth with the body, and that's the one that will harm you.

You see, I speak of this now because a great many people don't believe. They say that ghosts do not exist. But they do exist. But now, since the automobile and other transportation has overrun the highways, these spirits have sought refuge in the woods.

I remember one night we, my first cousin who lives up on the hill and I, were out in the river catching shrimps. And when we looked behind us, we saw a coffin, a natural coffin, Miss, shining down the crick. And when it came as close to us as the distance between you and that car, it disappeared into the marsh. The marsh separated from the burden and lay open. And I found myself sitting down without knowing when I became seated. . . . Yes, it was a natural coffin swimming down the river. Now that was a spirit coming down the river. Well, after [my cousin] spoke with it, it turned sharply to one side, flattened the marsh, and went up in the wood's edge only a distance as far as from us to the crick, and Lord, you could hear the confusion as it carried on in those woods.

Well, these things do exist. No, everybody can't see them. But if you are sensitive you can feel them. I have a daughter in New York today, and she could on any evening show you one ghost or two or three ghosts. "See it standing right there, Daddy!" But I couldn't see it to save my dying life. But she had always been frightened by ghosts. Finally, I took her to the hospital, and I don't know what the hospital

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personnel did to her, but since that time she never has seen any more. . . . She must have been born with something to be able to see them because she could stand and see them plainly and naturally. Yes, well, a great many people, a great many people that one associates with now can see them. They can see them and point them out to you. "See that person over there." Yes, yes. . . . That's the old devil. Well now, you know that I often exaggerate, but sometimes you walk alone, and if you feel a tremor as if your hair feels strangely on edge . . . that's right. Well, you see, your spirit has touched that evil spirit and your spirit has come back to your body.

For example, when you go to bed at night to sleep, to rest, the spirit leaves the body and when it leaves it goes in different parts of this country, all over the world. Sometimes when it comes in contact with an evil spirit, it runs back and scares you. You see, your spirit comes back and frightens you and you can neither sleep nor wake up. But if the spirit doesn't return to the body, you know that you are in heaven. In other words, you are not in the body here on earth. Now that's the truth. You get your Bible and read it. That is the truth.

2: Jones-Jackson L-5 (1973-1986) 1987
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surrounding area see Nichols, "Linguistic Change in Gullah"; and Charles Joyner, *Down by the Riverside: A South Carolina Slave Community* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984).

4. BCD Council of Governments, *Regional Housing Market Analysis*, 1979, p. 2.

5. Waccamaw Regional Planning and Development Council, *Waccamaw Regional Housing Element*, 1977, p. 8.

6. BCD, *Regional Housing Market Analysis*, p. 21.

7. The residents of Sandy Island have requested a bridge from the local government, but at this writing none is expected in the near future. At present all building materials, appliances, vehicles, and the like must be brought from the mainland by barge. And though residents enjoy the seclusion during the spring and summer, they complain—the children particularly—about being ferried across the river during the freezing rains that frequent the Carolina coast in winter.

8. For a discussion of the demographic characteristics of the Sea Island area see Elizabeth Donnan, *Documents Illustrative of the History of the Slave Trade to America*, vol. 4 (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1930); Turner, *Africanisms in the Gullah Dialect;* Philip D. Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969); and Peter H. Wood, *Black Majority: Negroes in Colonial South Carolina from 1690 through the Stone Rebellion* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1974).

9. Many hags, ghosts, and spirits are thought to haunt these highways, and some islanders fear them much more than the alligators, wolves, rattlesnakes, and other creatures which may prowl along the swamp roads at night.

10. Merrill G. Christophersen, *Biography of an Island* (Fennimore, Wis.: Westburg Assoc., 1976).

11. Sandy Island, in Georgetown County, is inhabited entirely by African-Americans. However, some Sea Islands just north of Charleston and closer to the coast, such as Pawleys, Sullivans, and the Isle of Palms, are peopled primarily by whites.

12. Marina Wikramanayake, *A World in Shadow: The Free Black in Antebellum South Carolina* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1973), pp. 158–59.

13. Jackson, Slaughter, and Blake, "The Sea Islands as a Cultural Resource," p. 33.

14. Frederic Bancroft, *Slave Trading in the Old South* (Baltimore: J. J. Furst Co., 1931), pp. 359–60. For further discussion of the slave trade in the Sea Island area see Georgia Writers Project, *Drums and Shadows* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1940; reprint, Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1973) p. xviii; Wood, *Black Majority;* and Joyner, *Down by the Riverside*.

15. BCD, *Regional Housing Market Analysis*, p. 19.

16. BCD, *Report on Economically Less Developed Areas*, p. 14.

17. Ibid., p. 13.

18. Ibid., p. 18.

19. June Manning Thomas, "The Impact of Corporate Tourism on Gullah Blacks: Notes on Issues of Employment," *Phylon* 41, no. 1 (Spring 1980): 4, 5.

20. BCD, *Report on Economically Less Developed Areas*, pp. 13, 17.

21. Thomas, "Impact of Corporate Tourism," p. 6.

22. Quoted in Mason Crum, *Gullah: Negro Life in the Carolina Sea Islands* (Du-

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nance.[18] The absence of mandatory secret societies as a means of maintaining corporate linkage and community loyalty points up the significance of kinship and lineage in a monarchial system such as that practiced by peoples of the Kongo region. Clan loyalty was paramount. If *Nzambi* ruled, reproved, and in the final analysis ordered the world according to divine design, ancestors superintended, rewarded, and welcomed the dead into their subterranean village. Ritually, BaKongo spiritual behavior was concatenated to ancestor devotion, not to *Nzambi*, though the spirit world consisted of forces unleashed by *Nzambi*. Among the most powerful of these were deceased elders of the clan, called *bakulu*—white spirits who roamed the earth (in woods, streams, and villages) and resided in the subterranean "world of no evil." Vital to ancestor reverence was the belief that discarnate human spirits maintain interest in their people after passing to the unseen society where they guard traditions and activities of the living. If family herds were squandered, ancestors took note and punished. If drought threatened the family herds, old chiefs in the spirit world might take pity and send rain. The power of ancestral spirits was commonly recognized.[19]

Belief in ancestoral spirits, in life after death, and in the significance of that future life gave funeral and burial rites a central place in African existence. Sick-bed attendance and a fitting send-off were essential observations of this rite of passage. Death halted routine activities when marriage or other rites did not. Failure to properly observe the death ritual could either implicate one in that death, or bring ill will to the erring clan member. The curse of the dying was much dreaded. In the American South, as noted by Herskovits, Bastide, Thompson, and others, black cemeteries represent a special historical relic. For here one finds the clearest, strongest visible examples of memories of African-inspired customs. African reverence for departed members of the family and group remained a factor in Gullah religious life even after they accepted Christianity. Gullah regard for deceased family members could not have equalled the homage paid to these spirits by Old World or "New" Africans. Still, spirits of the dead had to be reckoned with, and slaves believed they took the form of either good or evil supernatural forces. Vengeful spirits of the dead were those wronged during their lifetime, or "on easy" spirits perhaps indicating bewitchment, or they were the ancestors of outside families or groups. Hence in keeping with

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their traditional African heritage, Gullahs employed various means of pacification of the living dead, seemingly more derived from Bantu influence.[20]

Supernatural causation of suffering, disease, accidents, death under obscure circumstances, and other misfortunes was a core of African thought. Magic and medicine were employed for protection and healing. The use of sacred medicines called *minkisi* (singl. *nkisi*) was, along with ancestor reverence, fundamental to religion among Bantu peoples who lacked a complex system of lesser deities possessed for instance by the Yoruba peoples. Although *Nzambi* allowed death to come to humankind, the Deity also armed the people with *minkisi*. Minkisi power derived from two classes of medicine. They contained "spirit-embodying" (earth from a grave site for instance) and "spirit-admonishing" objects (seeds, claws, miniature knives, stones). Hence the basis of *nkisi* life source was a "captured soul," "spirit controlled by a man," and the charm's owner directed the spirit of the object to accomplish certain things.[21]

Medicine specialists, priests, and priestesses were, like ancestors, significant spiritual intermediaries. They were the great healers, or practitioners of "white magic" often symbolized by adornment with white chalk. Medicine specialists, called *nganga* by the BaKongo, discerned the cause of illness, holocaust, or unhappiness, discovered the culprit, and prescribed treatment and a means of preventing recurrence of the calamity. Since afflictions and misfortune were the workings of "black magic," called *kindoki* in KiKongo, diviners employed miraculous as well as herbal healing elements in their profession. As combatants of evil and antisocial behavior, they interceded spiritually with the supernatural and in some societies instructed patients regarding which ancestors or minor deities to approach for defensive and preventive measures. John Mbiti, an East African theologian and scholar, has offered a general synthesis of the African specialists' practice:

> The medicine man is in effect both doctor and pastor to the sick person. His medicines are made from plants, herbs, powders, bones, seeds, roots, juices, leaves, liquids, minerals, charcoal and the like; and in dealing with a patient, he may apply massages, needles or thorns, and he may bleed the patient; he may jump over the patient, he may use incantations and ventriloquism, and he may ask the patient to perform various things like sacrificing a chick or goat, observing some taboos or avoiding certain foods and persons—all these are in addition to giving the patient physical medicines.[22]

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CHAPTER 10

Gullah Attitudes Toward Death and the Supernatural

"En when I trabbles de deep woods, whey de moss wabe low en Mr. Cooter lib en Mr. Moccasin crawl en de firefly flicker—meh packet fer load.
Yas'm. I'm ready fer em. Gunpowder en sulpher. Dey es say Plat Eye can't stan dem smell mix. . . . So I totes meh powder en sulpher en I carries stick in meh han en puts meh truss in Gawd."*

Gullah's attached a tremendous significance to death, but there was little evidence of apprehension at the prospect of dying. Slaves lived in the presence of death so constantly that they seemed to consider the phenomenon as much a part of living as was their continuous labor. That they often reflected on the subject is evident in their spirituals. Yet these songs do not indicate that Gullahs thought of death with fear, foreboding, or morbidity. Perhaps it was partly this stoicism in the face of earthly demise that some observers viewed as resignation or the effects of demoralization. All African ethnic groups believed in life beyond physical death. Possibly Gullahs retained the West African bush-initiation experience in their attitude toward death. This idea of a symbolic journey to the world of the dead and a triumphant return might explain the Gullahs' ability to transcend feelings of dread about death and to disavow its ultimate power over them. But perhaps an equally strong influence was the BaKongo, since these societies had the most elaborate afterlife beliefs. The BaKongo four moments of the sun, as previously discussed,

*"Truss Gawd." South Carolina Folklore Project #1655, D-4-33, WPA, SCL.

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Another spiritual expressed a sense of optimism and a superior attitude toward death:

O Massa Death,
He's a very little man,
He goes from door to door;
He kills some souls,
and he woundeth some.
Good Lord remember me;
Good Lord remember me;
Remember me as the years roll round,
Good Lord, remember me.[2]

77 761 177 799 795 567

In Christian belief the finality of death was often negated. One of the most appealing aspects of Christianity for Gullahs was the expectation of a better life after death. This afterlife was not visualized in the African sense, that an individual's status would not differ from one's mortal position. Instead, Gullahs strongly adopted the Christian concept of heaven, where all "true believers" would sit on "Christ's right side." For obvious reasons, this was one of the tenets of Christianity they most cherished.[3] While their African world view encouraged Gullahs to take a rich, positive attitude toward life, through Christian influence they expected a better life as payment for their suffering. As one person expressed it:

> De harder me cross to bear down here de better I go be prepare to tek me place in dat Happy Land where all is 'joicin, an' when I git dere, I want de Lord to say, "Ophelia . . . come an' rest wid de elect ob de Lord!"[4]

There was little in Gullah prayers or songs to indicate they feared the tribunal expected to reward the "faithful" and damn the "sinners." Thus they disregarded that portion of their religious instruction which strenuously emphasized a judgment day where "every theft or falsehood" would be brought to light and held against them. What was more important to the Gullahs was a change in their conditions. Just as Baptist slavemaster Daniel Pope queried Marcus, the Praise House elder, as to whether the Gullahs really believed Christ wanted "black nigger in heben," so were slaves convinced that the "Kingdom of God" would have almost no white subjects. Gullah Christianity was one of recompense. Slaves accepted the Christian doctrine of eternal life but modified it so that heaven was an exclusive place, primarily available to sufferers of the right hue as expressed by a former slave:

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no sorcery involved, by praying out loud, reporting a heavenly vision or giving some evidence that peace had been made with God on the death-bed. A pious life counted for little if this was not observed. Nor did an evil life mean damnation, if the dying could satisfy spectators with an appropriate heavenly vision. What was probably more important to Gullahs was that the deceased be at peace with the world, hence assuring the community that he or she was not a witch, or bewitched, and would not return to "haant" the living.[10]

Those spirits destined for hell did not actually go there until judgment day, according to Gullahs. Instead, these "on-easy speerits" roamed the earth, having no resting place, and tormented the living. Some Gullahs believed that good spirits went straight to heaven, but most seemed to think that even these spirits remained on earth, close to the place of their burial. Unlike those who "died bad," good spirits would normally not harm the living, nor would they roam. They appeared only in dreams, giving messages and warnings to the living. Thus Gullahs had a real concern for coaxing an individual to "die good," and a real superstition about those who "died bad." The slaves devised various mechanisms of defense against the latter spirits.[11]

Much of the Gullahs' attitude toward death and belief in spirits was inherited from the African respect for and honor of the living dead, and from the African belief in the power of sorcery. Consider, for instance, a description of death among the Mende:

> When a dying man is panting for breath, the Mende say "Taa ha ha yiyei le ma" ("he is climbing the hill of death"). As soon as death is announced, the members of the family all begin to wail. The body of the deceased is then washed, and messages are sent to call the absent members of the family. . . . Members of the family will bring money, cloth, wine and rice as their contribution towards the funeral expenses. . . . On the fourth day for a man (the third day for a woman), the "crossing-the-river" ceremony takes place. . . . If these ceremonies are not properly performed, the evil will fall on those responsible.

Similarly, for Temne people, the underlying idea of funeral rites is to appease the spirit of the dead so they will not trouble the living. Mende also believe that separation of good and bad people takes place after their crossing the river. While there is no clear-cut idea as to who bad people are, they are chiefly thought of as those who dealt in "bad medicine or witchcraft." These evil ones in their spirit form will vent their feelings by sending disease and will manifest themselves by haunting the living

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and taking possession of them. Among the BaKongo, the curse of the dying is much dreaded, especially that of a relative, for the deceased will soon enter the spirit world. A dying person may admonish those around to take care of his or her affairs. "If you do not, I shall fetch you, and you will not become old here on earth." The dying one may also request the living to "wrap me well in the cloth that I leave," may insist that the living hold many lamentations after the death and care for the deceased's family. If not properly buried, the deceased might bring *kindoki* (evil).[12]

A curious example of the application of both African and Christian practices among the slaves is provided by a former South Carolina bondsman. According to the informant, a good-looking and very popular slave girl named Mary became ill and died after a lingering illness of four or six months' duration. The slaves on the surrounding plantations were sure that Mary had been conjured (poisoned) by a rival in a love triangle. The plantation proprietor, a Methodist minister, had Mary treated by his brother, a practicing physician. While the doctor was attending Mary, the slaves appealed to their own doctor, a plantation slave who also treated the young woman. But Mary died, and, according to the author, her funeral, which as was traditional took place at night, "was the largest ever held in all that region of the country":

> The coffin, a rough home-made affair, was placed upon a cart, which was drawn by an old Gray, and the multitudes formed in a line in the rear, marching two deep. The procession was something like a quarter of a mile long. Perhaps every fifteenth person down the line carried an uplifted torch. As the procession moved slowly toward "the lonesome graveyard" down by the side of the swamp, they sung the well-known hymn of Dr. Issac Watts:
>
> "When I can read my title clear
> To mansions in the skies,
> I bid farewell to every fear
> And wipe my weeping eyes."
>
> Mary's baby was taken to the graveyard by its grandmother, and before the corpse was deposited in the earth, the baby was passed from one person to another across the coffin. The slaves believed that if this was not done it would be impossible to raise the infant. The mother's spirit would come back for her baby and take it to herself.
>
> After this performance the corpse was lowered into the grave and covered, each person throwing a handful of dirt into the grave as a last farewell act of kindness to the dead, and while this was being done the leader announced that other hymn by Dr. Watts:

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ories of Telfair Hodgson, a number of her father's slaves came directly from Africa. The slaves' graves were "always decorated with the last articles used by the departed, and broken pitchers, and broken bits of colored glass were considered even more appropriate than the white shells from the beach nearby." Sometimes the slaves also carved "wooden figures like images of idols," or put a "patchwork quilt" on the grave. One twentieth-century investigator, Samuel Lawton, was told by a number of Sea Island ministers that it was also a common custom to bury articles along with the dead:

> You must not think that just because you do not find anything on those graves that the relatives did not put some things in there. It is most likely that they have a number of things buried with the body. I have often, at the burials I have conducted, seen the relatives pour hamper baskets full of things right down on top of the coffin before the dirt is shoveled into the grave.[17]

The custom of putting objects both in and on top of graves can be traced to African origins. The Ovimbundu place articles such as baskets, gourds, and instruments used in the burial on top of grave sites. Peoples in the Kongo were said to "mark the final resting-places of their friends by ornamenting their graves with crockery, empty bottles, old cooking-pots, etc." Many ethnic groups of the Windward Coast believed that it was necessary to provide the dead with various gifts, domestic articles, and clothing that could be of use in the life beyond the grave. Such articles, along with food and water, would be left at the grave, so that the spirit of the deceased would come and claim them.[18]

Although the Gullahs believed in two spirits, it was the "trabblin" spirit rather than the heaven-going spirit which caused the greatest concern. The reasons given for grave adornment clearly indicate the African precedent. One informant related:

> Yo' see, suh, everybody got two kinds ob speerits. One is der hebben-goin' speerit. . . . Den dere is de trabblin' speerit. . . . De hebben-goin' speerit don't gib you no trouble, but de trabblin' speerit, 'e be de one dat gib you worriment. E come back to de t'ings 'e like. E try fur come right back in de same house.[19]

Some Africans regarded their essential being as divided into "little me in the big me." Apparently "little me" existed before life and would continue to exist after death in the spirit world. This relates to the Gullah informant's idea of two kinds of spirits. The heaven-going spirit, "little me," depending on how one died, would, after death, rest in the

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spirit world while the traveling spirit would torment the living. Hence, Gullahs asserted that the last used articles were buried with the deceased to "keep de speerit outen de house." This would go along with the Gullah practice of thoroughly cleaning the deceased's house to break earthly ties. Another explanation which the Gullahs offered was "to satisfy de speerit at de grave." It was said that the spirit desired to be near objects that it loved before death. "Yessuh," stated one informant, "dey puts t'ings on de grave so dey be handy fur de speerit and he be satisfy."[20]

Like Africans, Gullahs had a definite revulsion against the return of the deceased in the form of "trabblin' speerits" regardless of the kind of life the individual had lived. These spirits were considered evil, similar to *kindoki* among the BaKongo. Every effort was made to pacify these "speerits." This is further illustrated by the presence of whiskey bottles on the graves in churchyards. A Gullah minister provided the following explanation:

> When a man is living it take liquid whiskey in he stomach to make him drunk, but when a man is dead he don't hab a stomach to hol' de liquor, but it don't take nuttin' but de fumes from whiskey to make a speerit drunk. Dose dat bin used to gittin' drunk fo' dey dies, dey will keep on gittin' drunk after dey dies, so dey t'ink dat de speerit ob a drunkard will hover right in front ob de mout' ob a livin' person when he bin drinkin' so he can whiff de fumes ob de whiskey on he bre't an' dat will make de speerit drunk. But ain't no livin' man want no speerit hover right dere in front ob he mount', so dat is why dey puts whiskey bottles on de drunkard's grave. De whiskey bottles on de graves is empty 'cause de smell is enough to satisfy de speerit an' make 'en drunk.[21]

Gold Coast Africans believed that the spirits made use of all offerings left by friends and relatives after death. Mende carried to the graveside cooked chicken together with rice and red palm oil. This mixture was placed on a banana leaf and laid by the side of the grave. Sometimes soil was dug out and the red rice placed in a hole. Then a little water was placed on the grave and words were spoken: "Here is water, wash your hands, eat your rice, drink your water." The family then ate the remainder of the chicken and rice and offered a prayer, indicating that the family had done right by the deceased and expected the dead to remain there and to protect them:

> We are leaving you as we have finished your last ceremony. We want you, from now on, to look after your children (other members of the family may be mentioned). May no bad thing fall on them.[22]

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Similarity of beliefs and motives regarding grave adornment is best illustrated by the types of articles found on graves in the Sea Islands. Such objects as partially filled medicine bottles, mirrors, broken pitchers, saucers and cups, mayonnaise jars, pickle jars, vaseline, cold cream, tobacco, and black pepper were placed on graves. Seashells were also commonly placed on graves. Other personal items included shaving brushes, toothbrushes, mirrors, combs, and belt buckles. In addition, twelve Gullah ministers reported to Samuel Lawton that other articles of food such as grapes, oranges, apples, bananas, bread, and cake were often placed on graves and soon eaten by animals and birds. Further efforts to satisfy the spirits of the dead consisted of pouring water on the grave during a drought. This custom could have been for the purpose of quenching the thirst of the spirit so that the dead would not disturb the living by seeking water.[23]

Gullah decoration of graves indicates a firm belief in the return of ancestors from the world of the dead. Offerings on graves were statements of homage and in these graveyards, one finds the strongest expressions of African-inspired memories. Many objects are associated with or used to hold water. In BaKongo religion, deceased ancestors became white creatures called *bakulu*. They lived in the village of the dead, referred to as the land of all things white. This village was located under river beds and lakes. *Bakulu's* white spiritual transparency allowed them to return to the world of the living undetected. Sea shells, used on Gullah graves, for instance, are an important theme in BaKongo metaphysics. One BaKongo prayer which addresses the shells states, "As strong as your house, you shall keep my life for me. When you leave for the sea, take me along, that I may live forever." The essence of this prayer is recaptured by the late Bessie Jones of St. Simons Island, Georgia. She related:

> The shells stand for the sea. The sea brought us, the sea shall take us back. So the shells upon our graves stand for water, the means of glory and the land of demise.[24]

Just as sea shells and pottery express immortal existence, and the significance of a water underworld, so the glittering, iridescent mirrors and porcelain on Gullah graves reflect the light which represents the spirit. These objects, like water when struck by sunlight, are intimations of the flash of the separated spirit in symbolized flight. Mirrors, lamps, porcelain, and glass are spirit-embodying once they are placed on the graves.

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Their presence keeps the spirit away from the living. The significance of spiritual proximity in brilliance gave rise to the BaKongo custom of lighting bonfires on graves to lead one's soul to another world. Similarly, Gullah torchlight burials may have had a deeper meaning than simply lighting the path. Certainly the presence of lamps on African-American graves indicates that perhaps this was a means of lighting the way to the world beyond, and keeping away the deceased's spirit. Furthermore, the decorations imply the deceased's entrance into the fourth moment, a spiritual existence where all is light and brilliance. Breaking pottery and porcelain was perhaps not done to prevent theft, as some researchers believe, but may indicate the deceased's spiritual release and break with earthly life.[25]

Another interesting continuity between Gullah and African traditions in regard to burial is the position of the deceased. In Central West Africa, the coffin is placed so that the deceased faces eastward. Folklorist Elsie Parsons noted that Gullah graves were "invariably dug east to west, with the head to the west." Thomas Higginson wrote in his diary of a "very impressive" funeral for two black soldiers in his regiment. Just before the coffins were lowered, "an old man whispered to me that I must have their positions altered,—the heads must be towards the west." Higginson complied without asking why. Gullahs and Africans shared a concept of the cosmos. The world followed the sun from east to west.[26]

Sea Island slaves retained a belief in the power of agents of evil and easily included the Christian devil in their hierarchy. Ghosts, hags, plat-eyes, conjurers, and others were all instruments of Satan. At times their faith in God may not have surpassed their fear of the devil.[27] On other occasions God could, for the sake of "the faithful," take the role of a conjurer and bring evil instead of good. Although Gullahs believed that Satan and his cohorts were mainly responsible for evil, they also felt that God was sometimes willing to bring evil down upon an adversary of one of His own. In the following illustration, God reportedly used His power in this way. July Brown was a high officer in one of the churches on Edisto Island. When he was interviewed in the 1930s for the Federal Writers Project, he related the story of how he once prayed a man to death:

> I been on de Savannah train goin' to Charleston. My wallet been jam down deep in my hip pocket. Must ob had 'bout twenty dollars in um. Lo and behold when I git to de Union station, I feel in my pocket to git street cyar money, and my wallet done gone! I notice dat when I come out ob de train uh black, shaap face

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nigger been press close to me. I say: "Dats de bery man steal my money." I'quire roun de station and find out who he be. Dey say he uh man from John Island and dey call 'e name to me.

No, I ain't make no 'temp to call de police. Dat man done spend de money anyhow. I jest say: "All right. I goin' to leave yuh wid God."

When I git home, I shet my door and put de whole ting 'fore God. I tell um my trouble and what dat man done 'gainst me. In two week time dat man jest as stiff and cold as uh piece ob iron.[28]

This may be similar to the power of *nkisi*, essentially a positive force working for the good, to ward off *kindoki*, and thus doing an evil deed. Generally speaking, however, the deity represented forces of good. Gullahs believed in the power of God and saw that power as a form of protection. This may perhaps explain why interviewers for the Federal Writers Project observed that nearly all the doors and windows of Gullah cabins were painted blue, the color of the heavens. One theory was that the custom of painting doors and windows blue was an unconscious holdover from the early days of slavery in the Sea Islands when Gullahs were given the residue from indigo vats to use on the doors and windows of their cabins. However this does not explain the fact that Gullah conjurers concocted pills for their "patients" the color of which was usually blue also. Perhaps then, the shade blue was effective in keeping out "speerits." Spirits were said to be afraid of blue because it reminded them of heaven, hence evil beings could not stand the sight of blue. But the Gullahs themselves would not verify either notion regarding their preference for blue. If asked why they painted their doors and windows blue, Gullahs would smile wryly and say some people "jest lak dat color."[29]

Thus, while Gullahs turned gratefully to the Christian God, whom they regarded as a warm, personal friend, this did not prevent them from retaining some of their ingrained customs and beliefs, as is observed in their attitudes toward life, death and the supernatural. And, even in the Gullahs' approach toward death, a sense of community prevailed. The ritual was observed with respect and responsibility. There was a feeling of satisfaction that, while the individual had to cross the river alone, the right impetus had been given before the deceased left the earth, and thus the living had done their part by fulfilling their collective obligation for the last time.

A direct relationship appears to exist between the African and Gullah theory of being. In both, God (Jesus for the Gullahs) was the apex,

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APPENDIX E

Gullah Folkways

177 178 Because they occupied a position of servitude, the Gullahs had to accept outwardly, points of view, customs, and beliefs to which they were exposed by the dominant society. Nevertheless, through sublety and secretiveness they were able to retain some of their previously held beliefs and practices. After slavery, the Gullahs were occasionally willing to share some of their beliefs, customs, and "superstitions" with those readily identifiable as friends, or with those who would not censure the Gullahs for their ways of thinking. Thus a wealth of information about Gullah culture was collected from various sources, but particularly by WPA workers. The following information related to Gullah folk religion and supernatural beliefs provides a mere sample of the material. Unless otherwise stated, this information on Gullah folk beliefs was taken from the WPA files at the South Carolina Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia. Although more research is needed in this area, it was nevertheless possible to trace some of these beliefs to African origins.

127 128 178

Folk Beliefs

775 856 828 Spirits show themselves to babies more often than to grown people. When babies smile or cry out in their sleep, it is because some spirit is amusing or troubling them.

764 789 If there is a baby in a house of death, pass the baby over the coffin. This will prevent the spirit from returning to trouble the baby.

845 791 787 People born with a caul or veil over their faces are supposed to have strange powers, to foretell the future, see spirits, etc.[a]

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Spirits lift their feet high off the ground when they walk. If they come around your bed when you are sick and stay for some time, it means you are going to get well. The spirits belong to your dead relatives, who have come back to earth to see how you are. If they come and then go away again, it means that they have come for you and you are going to die.

Spirits come back to the earth sometimes in the shape of animals. They do this because they are evil spirits and want to worry humans. It is easy to tell whether a dog or cat that crosses your path is a natural animal or spirit. If it is a natural animal you won't feel anything, but if it is a spirit, the hair will stand up on your head and the goose bumps will rise on your skin.[b,e]

To prevent a dead person's spirit from returning to "Hant you," sprinkle turpentine on the floor behind the body as it is taken out of the house. The turpentine carries the spirit with it.

To keep "hants" (evil spirits) off when there is a death, burn sulphur at the four corners of the house.

If a person who has voodooed another looks in the face of the corpse when he is in his coffin, blood will gush from the mouth of the corpse and everyone present will know who "fixed" him and caused his death.

There are certain persons among the Gullah Negroes who are known as "conjurers," these are very dangerous people and not to be trifled with. A conjurer can "put bad mout" on people or things, give them bad luck and keep them from prospering. A "spell" cast by a conjurer can cause a person to become ill and slowly waste away until he dies.

A conjurer is a very secret thing. Negroes will not discuss it with a white person. It is black magic and to treat it lightly is to invite disaster. They will admit quite readily however, if they have had a particularly bad run of luck, that somebody has "put bad mount" on them.[c]

Negroes of the South Carolina Sea Islands seldom employ the word "witch" in describing an old woman who is versed in the art of witchcraft. Accurately speaking there are no witches among the Negroes—at

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754 least in the usual sense of the word. The blacks generally speak about
754 "hags"—beings who have all the powers ascribed to witches and a great
754 deal more. A hag is the disembodied spirit of an old woman who practices witchcraft. She is able to slip off her skin at night and roam about, under the earth, on the earth or above the earth, without anyone being able to see her. A person without skin is always invisible, but it is possible to feel them.

When darkness sets in, the hag who has been in the body during daylight hours, frees herself from the flesh, and proceeds to pursue her dread calling—that of "riding" persons against whom she has spite, or plaguing individuals she has been paid to worry. She is able to slip through the smallest cracks of your house while you sleep. She deposits her skin in the chimney corner. On your back, she pummels you to exhaustion, then sucks your blood. Upon leaving, she cries, "Kin, Kin, you know me," until the skin has fitted itself to the hag's body.

Anybody with common sense knows when he is being ridden by a hag.
[828] First he will have unpleasant dreams and every night they become more alarming. Insomnia is a sure sign, as is worrying at night. If the hag is not called off the person will lose his mind.

A hag will ride your enemy for a small pittance.[d]

Supernatural Beliefs

77 "The Negroes who live down on the salt in the Sea Island region of South Carolina are firm believers in a motley variety of supernatural beings. To them the earth is filled with ghosts, plat-eyes, boo-daddies,
[369] boo-hags, drolls and spirit animals. Only the educated Negroes who have contact with the big cities of America deny the existence of these outer-world creatures. The rest of the Sea Island blacks are steeped in the same superstitions that their forefathers held in Africa."

•795 *Ghosts*—A ghost is very real thing to the Negroes of Edisto and Wadmalaw Islands. A ghost, the materialized body of one who is dead, may be said to have the same dignity as a human being as far as its existence is concerned. The Gullahs say that they know exactly where ghosts could

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be seen, their familiar haunts, the time they have to leave their graves and their time of return.

For instance, all ghosts leave the graveyard at twelve midnight and return at "fust fowl crow"—all but one who is left on guard. They walk ten feet high off the ground, and cover long distances at a surprisingly short length of time. They like certain trees and certain houses. They have never been known to attack a human being physically, but are able to scare one to death.

These spirits are the "on-easy" spirits who are destined for hell on judgment day, but who roam the earth and "hant" the living for they have no place to rest themselves. These "ghosts," "speerits", or "hants" fall into the following categories:[e]

Plat-eye—There are a number of beliefs regarding plat-eye. One is that plat-eye is the spirit of some of "those old timey people what been dead a long time." Another is that plat-eyes come into being when one buries a treasure and places the head of a murdered man in the hole with the valuables. If an intruder approaches the spot, the plat-eye will arise out of the ground in the guise of a six-legged calf or headless hog and frighten the trespasser away.[g]

Boo-hags—are spirits of hags. They are sent to plague and pester the enemies of the voodoo practitioner, or the enemies of the conjure man's clients. The spell can only be removed by a charm made by another doctor-nigger or witch who has superior knowledge of black magic.

Boo-daddies—are the spirits of doctor-niggers and conjure men released from the body of the living at night for dread purposes.

Drolls—are the spirits of young children who died a painful death. They can be heard, the Negroes say, crying piteously at night in deep swamps and deserted marshland.

Spirit-animals—are numerous. One particularly fearsome cat, which sometimes reaches a height of ten feet and explodes before one's eyes when the Lord's prayer is recited backwards, can be seen at Hamilton Hill on Edisto Island, when the moon is young.[b,f,g]

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had been buried in jars. It was said that these jars also had human bones either beside them or under them, "and tradition has it that the slave-owners who are believed to have been strong in magic customarily killed the most evil slave on a plantation that his spirit might keep watch over the jars. If the owner returned, the spirit of the slave, as a 'sold baka,' remained to wreak vengeance upon anyone who dared disturb his charge." Nassau, *Fetishism in West Africa*, 71; Melville J. Herskovits, *Life in a Haitian Valley* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1937), 242–43.

A "Ghost" Story

A certain negro church in the country was noted for its strange procedures during the late hours of the night. It was said that at one time a man was driving down the road about midnight, and as he approached the church he saw to his surprise that it was all lit up and the benches filled with people. Just as he drove up the lights went out, and all the people came out, crossed the road in front of him, and went into the cemetery which was just opposite the church on the other side of the road.

Another man was passing the church one night. Just as he got between the church and the cemetery, a ghost came out, caught his horse by the bit and stopped him.

These and similar stories were repeatedly heard throughout the neighborhood, so a young Negro man was not surprised when passing by the church one night to hear voices in the cemetery.

One would say, "You take this one; I take that one."

Then the other, "I take this one; you take that one."

So on they went over and over. The young Negro ran across the field to the Negro preacher's house. After waking the aged preacher, the young man told him "de good Lord an' de devil are in de cemetery a'dividin' up de people." He insisted that the old man go with him to the cemetery to see about it. Reluctantly, the old man consented.

Sure enough as they reached the gate, they heard, "You take this one; I take that one." "I take this one; you take that one." After this was repeated several times, one voice was heard to say, "Well, is that all?" the answer came, "Yes, all except those two at the gate."

That was enough for the two listening ones. The young Negro tells

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that the old preacher got away from there so fast that he, who was also running with all his strength—couldn't keep him in sight. 539 [775] [226]

At least this story had its explanation. The next day the old preacher and the young man were told that two Negroes after a fishing trip had stopped under a tree in the cemetery to divide their fish. One had a sack full of fish. The other had only two which he had dropped on the ground as he opened the gate of the cemetery.

Truss Gawd

"Plat Eye? Yas'm. De ole folks is talk about Plat Eye. Dey say dey takes shape ob all kind de critter—dawg, cat, hawg, mule, varmint—and I is hear tell ob Plat Eye taking form of gator. I ain see dem scusing one leetle time. You know dat leetle swampy place hind de Parsenage? Dem does call dat Parsenage Branch. Well, one time I hab meh bloom on me en wuz clamming dem days, en de tide been berry late in de ebenin. Hit wuz dusky dark when I hit de Parsenage Lane—light dusky dark. I wuzn't feared none tall. You see, ez I say, I hab meh bloom on me in dem days. En I pass de Cap'n barn en stable. Dere he wuz wid Allan son milkin. En I say: "Good even, Cap'n Bill!' En he gin me back meh word. En I bawg t'ru dat deep white san en I passes de graveyard entrance en I leabes de [gate] open en enters dem dark woods whey de moss wabe low en bresh in you face. En I bin think about Plat Eye. De mind come ter me it wuz good time ter meet em. 539 776 825

"Den I bresh dem weepin moss aside en I trabble de wet mud in meh bare feets en meh shoe bein tie ter meh girdle string. En, Miss Jin, when I bin come ter de foot lawg I could see same ez I see yo now. I could see de foot lawg—dat same old cypress what been dere now. He blow in dat las big September gale. En I bin see Mr. Bull Frawg hit de water—ker plunk! En a cooter slide offen de lawg at meh feets. En, Miss Jin, clare ter Gawd, I bin fer look up at dat cooter den I turn meh eye up en dere wuz a cat—black cat wid he eye lak balls ob fire en he back all arch up en he tail twissin en er switchin en he hair stan on end. He move backward front ob me cross dat cypress lawg. En he bin big. He bin large es meh leetle yearlin ox. En I talk ter em en try fer draw close. En I say ter em; 'I ain fer fear nuttin!'

"En I'se try fer sing: 'He carry me t'ru many ob danger. Because he fust lub me. He guard gainst hant en Plat Eye. Because he fust lub me!'

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113 *Peoples of Africa* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1965), 450–52, 458; Wyatt MacGaffey, *Custom and Government in the Lower Kongo* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970), 84; Laman, *Kongo* II: 130–31; Balandier, *Daily Life in Kongo*, 246–47.

19. Laman, *Kongo*, II: 22–23; Balandier, *Daily Life in Kongo*, 217–20, 246–57; Willoughby, *Soul of Bantu*, 71, 77–82, 315; Weeks, *Among the BaKongo*, 158–71.

191 20. Weeks, *Among the BaKongo*, 266–68, 278; Laman, *Kongo*, II: 92; MacGaffey, *Custom*
113 *in Lower Kongo*, 148–50; Willoughby, *Soul of Bantu*, 86; Opoku, *West African Religion*, 36–
791 39; Amponsah, *Topics on African Traditional Religion*, 86; Harris and Sawyerr, *Mende Belief*, 30–33; Melville J. Herskovits, *The Myth of the Negro Past* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1958; repr. from 1941 ed.), 206; Roger Bastide, *African Civilizations in the New World*, trans. Peter
•795 Green (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 106, 161; Thompson and Cornet, *Four Moments of the Sun*, 181–203; Thompson, *Flash of the Spirit*, 132–58; John M. Vlach, *The Afro-American Tradition in Decorative Arts* (Cleveland, Ohio: Cleveland Museum of Art, 1978), 139–47; Elizabeth A. Fenn, "Honoring the Ancestors; Kongo-American Graves in the American South," *Southern Exposure* 28 (September–October, 1985): 42–57; "Notes and Documents; Antebellum and War Memories of Mrs. Telfair Hodgson," Sarah Hodgson Torian, ed., *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 27, no. 4 (December, 1953): 352; Albert H. Stoddard, "Origin, Dialect, Beliefs and Characteristics of the Negroes of the South Carolina and Georgia Coasts," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 28 (September, 1944): 181–93; Irving E. Lowrey, *Life on the Old Plantation* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1911), 81–86; South Carolina Folklore Project, #1655, D-4-27A, WPA, SCL: Folk-Lore Scrap-Book, "Mortuary Customs and Beliefs of South Carolina Negroes," from an article originally published in the *Atlanta Constitution* by May A. Waring, *Journal of American Folk-Lore* 7 (1894): 318–19.

191 21. Opoku, *West African Religion*, 147–51; Amponsah, *Topics on African Traditional Reli-*
113 *gion*, 80–84; Parsons, *Religion in an African Society*, 50–55, 71–72, 186; Harris and Sawyerr, *Mende Belief*, Chapter 4; Sibley and Westermann, *Liberia*, 211–213; Balandier, *Daily Life in Kongo*, 248–50; Laman, *Kongo* III: 81–104; Weeks, *Among the BaKongo*, 214–20, 232–35; Willoughby, *Soul of Bantu*, 192–95; Thompson and Cornet, *Four Moments of the Sun*, 37; Thompson, *Flash of the Spirit*, 106–7, 117–19; E. J. Glave, "Fetishism in Congo Land," *Century* 41 (November–April, 1890–91): 825–26.

22. Parsons, *Religion in an African Society*, 50–55, 71–72, 186; Harris and Sawyerr, *Mende Belief*, Chapter 4; Sibley and Westermann, *Liberia*, 211–13; Laman, *Kongo*, III: 57, 81–104, 157–59; Weeks, *Among the BaKongo*, 231–36; Thompson and Cornet, *Four Moments of the Sun*, 110–14; Thompson, *Flash of the Spirit*, 106–7, 117–21; Janzen and MacGaffey, *Kongo Religion*, 34–35; Mbiti, *African Religions*, 169, Chapters 15–16.

23. Sibley and Westermann, *Liberia*, 213–14; Harris and Sawyerr, *Mende Belief*, 54–59; Rattray, *Religion in Ashanti*, 148–49; Mbiti, *African Religions*, 168–171, Chapters 15–16; Thompson and Cornet, *Four Moments of the Sun*, 37; Janzen and MacGaffey, *Kongo Religion*, 34–35; Laman, *Kongo*, III: 81–105.

24. Mbiti, *African Religions*, 166–67, Rattray, *Religion in Ashanti*, 38–39; Parsons, *Religion in an African Society*, 71–72; Sibley and Westermann, *Liberia*, 211; Folkways Research Series, *History of Gola Tribe*, II: 22–23; Glave, "Fetishism in Congo Land," 828–29; Weeks, *Among the BaKongo*, 214–18; Thompson and Cornet, *Four Moments of the Sun*, 37, 110–14; Laman, *Kongo*, II: 130–32.

(791) 25. *SCA*, June 26, 1840, June 26, 1843, October 30, 1847; *Minutes; Beaufort Baptist Church*, "Origin of the Colored Societies," October 7, 1859, Business Meeting in which organization of societies was discussed, 271–72, January 7, 1842 and November 1, 1840, 12, BC; *SCA*, Diary of Laura M. Towne, 52, 162, Penn School Papers, SHC; John L. Field to George W. Moore, March 21, 1833, HSSCC.

4: Caravan & Caravan B,Z-5 (1959-1988) 1989
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Mrs. Mary Pinckney

I TOO SCARED THEN

People say if you look over your left shoulder you'll see ghosts. Tell about hag and all kind of thing like that. I look back over my left shoulder all the time, I don't see no ghost. I never see none, but I believe in ghost. Some – call 'em ghost, some call 'em spooks, boodyman. That's the way we is call 'em when we was little–boodyman.

That old man, Michael Brown, he's always be to our house. I guess he's 'round about seventy-five. He is come over every Sunday and he sit down and talk about all these old-time thing. Talk about old-time ghost. He say when he go home nighttime he have to carry a stick and feel his way, 'specially if it dark, 'cause ghost is crowded in the path. He take stick go "whicha-whoocha-whoocha," clear his way. I be glad when he go home 'cause he talk about those thing and make me scared. Mama like to listen. Not me. I say, "Take your hat and go home." I too scared then. Ghost!

Mr. James Mackey

THEY'LL KNOCK YOU OFF YOUR FOOT

Some people died, their spirit walk around. If a person died happy, they don't bother you. But people died bad, well, they'll knock you off your foot.

One most knock me off my foot one night. I was coming out just about dusk-dark and something come around me like a long black snake–tie around me. It shoot up and I ain't feel like I was onto the ground at all. Only way I came back in this world, a dog smell my scent and that dog bark. Didn't for that, I'd been *gone*.

When my foot touch ground, feel like I been off the ground. I go and curse 'em. They say if I pray I might of get off much better. The more I curse, the more I guess he try to knock me.

When the feeling get back to me, then I start to walk–taking me [illegible] just like when a person sick–and I could imagine he up behind me. My [illegible] on my head just tauten up. I got back home, gone to bed that night with all my clothes on.

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Mrs. Janie Hunter

WHEN YOU GET TO OLD AGE YOU TURN A HAG

795 I say see it to believe it. Ghosts shows up to some people, and some people they don't. But I'm not scared of 'em. I'm more scared of live.

796 888 But hags, that's real. When you get to old age, you turn a hag. Hags come to your house and hag your children. Children can't sleep, or a hag take somebody child and put 'em under the bed. Sometime a hag sit on you and keep you from getting up, try to smother you.

But you could tell a hag. I heard my old people say, if you want to tell a hag, put a broom 'cross your door. If that's a hag, he going take up that broom, ain't going step across it.

[789] If hag bother you, use salt and pepper. Sprinkle either by your bed or 'cross your door and they won't come in. The salt burn their skin.

Mrs. Mary Pinckney

I GOT A BLUESY FEELING

533 I like blues. My uncles Benji and Willis—oh, they could sing! Willis is come home 'round twelve . ad one o'clock in the night and wake up everybody on the hill. Go one side by the pump and he sing that blues from then 'til four in the morning. Wake up everybody. Mama is come outside, say, "Willis, why don't you come on in the house?"

"Can't come in the house right now, Doll, I got a bluesy feeling." He sing.

[534] And Benji, Benji could sing! He have one them cowhorn and he get up and put it to his mouth and blow 'em. Just like a trumpet. And Willis be singing the song and he be blowing the horn and they going down the road blowing and singing. And I be right there listening to 'em. I follow them too. They is like for I follow them 'cause I sing right along with them.

[534] My brothers sing blues too. Joe, he like all different kind of song—spiritual and blues. Sometime he be home by heself and go on the road or stay on that porch or go under a tree, sit down and just play his guitar and sing his song. And I'll go and help him.

539 46. bɛk nju ɬɪäin / no ju kĭ silip si / ɛn dɛn ju ɻĭ βiekɔ̃p / dispeit dɔ̃
back an-you frighten. No, you can't sleep, see, and then you can't wake-up. The-spirit don't

47. kɔ̃m bɛk tu ju / nɔ ɪɬ de speit dɔ̃ kɔm bɛk tu ju / ju nuo ju
come back to you. Now if the spirit don't come back to you, you know you

48. dɛ / ɪn ɔre wud / ju ɛ̃ die oβə ɦɪə / nɔdä tɹuɬ / nɔ /
there. In other word, you ain't there over here. Now-that truth, now

49. nɔ dɔ̈s tɹuɬ / ju gɪt dɪ bɔrbl ɛn ju ɪirɔm / dɔ̈s tɹuɬ /
Now that's truth. You get the Bible and you read (3ɬ o). That's truth.

539 Listen well now, when you die, you see the soul of a man goes home
•775 to the Kingdom of God. But, your spirit remains here on earth. And if you were an evil-doer all of your life, then after you die, your spirit can continue doing the same kind of evil. Your soul is in heaven, but your spirit remains here on Earth with the body and that's the one that will harm you.

You see, I speak of this now because a great many people don't believe. They say that ghosts do not exist. But, they do exist. But now, since the automobile and other transportation overruns the highways, these spirits have sought refuge in the woods.

I remember one night we, my first cousin who lives up on the hill and I, were out in the river catching shrimp. And when we looked behind us, we saw a coffin, a natural coffin, Miss, shining down the crick. And when it came as close to us as the distance between you and that car, it disappeared into the marsh. The marsh separated from the burden and layed open. And I found myself sitting down without knowing when I became seated... Yes, it was a natural coffin swimming down the river. Now that was a spirit coming down the river. Well, after (my cousin) spoke with it, it turned sharply to one side, flattened the marsh and went up in the woods' edge only a distance as

539 775 far as from us to the crick, and Lord you could hear the confusion as it 'carried on' in those woods. Well, these things do exist.... No, everybody can't see them. But if you are sensitive you can feel them. I have a daughter in New York today, and she could on any evening, show you one ghost or two or three ghosts. 'See it standing right there, daddy!' But I couldn't see it to save my dying life. But she had always been frightened by ghosts. Finally, I took her to the hospital and I don't know what the hospital personnel did to her, but since that time she never has seen any more.... She must have been born with something to be able to see them because she could stand and see them plainly and naturally. Yes, well, a great many people, a great many people that one associates with now can see them. They can see them and point them out to you. 'See that person over there.' Yes.... Yes.... That's the old devil. Well now, you know that I often exaggerate, but sometimes you walk alone, and if you feel a tremor as if your hair feels strangely on edge...that's right. Well, you see [774] your spirit has touched that evil spirit and your spirit has come back to your body.

539 774 [513] For example, when you go to bed at night to sleep, to rest, the spirit leaves the body and when it leaves it goes in different parts of this country, all over the world. Sometimes when it comes in contact with an evil spirit, it runs back and scares you. You see, your spirit comes back and frightens you and you can neither sleep nor wake up. But if the spirit doesn't return to the body, you know that you are in heaven. In other words, you are not in the body here on earth. Now that's the truth. You get your Bible and read it. That is the truth.

speakers other than those consulted for the pronominal count. Similarly, *he own* and *she own* are often heard and were recorded by Turner (1949) and Cunningham (1970).

11. The neuter possessive pronouns are excluded from this analysis because they occurred too infrequently in the data. Nichols (1976) also notes the infrequency with which they appeared in her study.

12. Hancock's word list supplies most of the means for comparison of words in the Atlantic creoles unless specified otherwise. (Hancock 1970:7-72).

13. The selection of a rounded or unrounded variant of /ɔ/ has not yet been associated with factors of style, sex, age or other variables.

14. *Hag* has an unusual meaning for the Islanders. It can mean a person, man or woman, dead or alive. For this narrative, it is used to refer to a haunted house—a house inhabited by spirits or one living person with unusual powers.

15. This consultant's speech exemplifies the system of rule changes discussed earlier. He consistently uses the English past tense marker along with the Creole *was bin*. The fact that *was* is FOLLOWED by *bin* is an indication that the Creole form is the self-correction and that the speaker relies more heavily on the Creole form to make himself understood.

538 193

1. *snake*	[sinick]	∅ → V / C ___ C
2. *program*	[pogɛm]	r → ∅ / C ___
	[pogɛɛ]	neutralization

21. The verb *say* is formulaic and appears after communicative verbs to introduce objective clauses or direct quotations. This practice is paralleled in Twi, Ewe, Mende and Igbo (Turner 1949:211). Similar constructions occur in Jamaican Creole, Tamil, Bengal, and Marathi. [197]

22. /nɔ/ is a negative resulting from the assimilation of /no/ and /dɔ/, a form of the verb 'to be'. Before negative transformation, the sentence would read /ɪm dɔ lɔɪ/ 'he is lying.' After negative placement and assimilation, the sentence reads /ɪm nɔ lɔɪ/ 'he is not lying.'

23. /ʊnɔ/ is a pronoun form marking second person in Gullah. It has an identical parallel in Igbo Ụ,NỤ, (Turner 1949:227).

539 •775 775

24. This speaker is deeply religious. The tripartite division of body, soul and spirit is unparalleled in European religions. I was informed by an Igbo consultant that this concept is widespread in West Africa. According to this Gullah speaker, the spirit remains on earth with the body after death, but the soul progresses home to the kingdom of God. Depending on the deceased person's lifestyle, the earthly spirit may be good or evil. In life, the spirit leaves the body periodically to roam and wander

539 774

539 while one sleeps. If the living spirit comes in contact
774 with an evil spirit, living or dead, while outside of its sleeping body, it will race to return to protect the body. When it returns to the body the person wakes up frightened
[761] as a result of the spirit's experience. If the spirit fails to return to the body, the person dies in sleep.

539 25. When children are born with a caul over their
775 faces, they are thought to be able to see ghosts. This
845 concept is also widespread in inland Black communities. To eliminate the problem at birth, the caul is chopped, cooked and fed to the infant so that it returns to the spirit within the body. It is thought by the islanders that the spirit alone should possess the visionary power.

538 26. Line 18: the phrase *dark the light* is understood by Gullah speakers to mean 'the sun had set', or 'the sun was shrouded by clouds'. Reference is made to the sun in line 26, *The heavier de was getting*, which means the sun was getting lower and lower in the sky.

538 27. Line 19: *Yatta* is the African name given to his
551 mother at birth. *Liza* is her English name, which she used only in business affairs. Turner (1949:40) notes that most Gullah speakers use two kinds of given names: one English, called their true name and used in outside communications, and the other a pet or basket name, used among friends and relatives. The practice still continues.

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192 used in the sense of hunger or want, or like the proverbial wolf: "Haffuh wu'k haa'd fuh keep Stepney frum de do'."
[175] *Plat-eye* signifies a ghastly and ghostly night apparition which it is extremely dangerous, even fatal, to meet or see, common to the Georgetown section of the coast. *Plat-eye prowl* is the vivid phrase for the depth of night when it is ill to be abroad.

Gullah English is full of picturesque, interesting words and phrases. Consider, for example, the following: *schemy; speckly; settle' 'ooman*, a woman of a certain age, not a flapper; *newfanglety; disgustuss; foot* for leg: "Deer hab long foot, him run fas'; Cootuh hab shawt foot, him trabble slow"; *buckra*, white man, then simply "white," as *buckra yam*, white potato, *buckra chalk*, white chalk; *altwo*, both, each; *peruse*, to saunter, walk slowly, "Da' gal him bin peruse 'long de road, en 'e nebbuh study 'bout nutt'n"; *ractify*, first "to break," as "Da' buggy ractify," then "to become confused" (mentally), "Da' 'ooman ractify een 'e min'"; *gunjuh* (from gingerbread), the scalloped molasses cakes sold in stores; *Mass, Mas*, (Master) when used with the name: *Mass' John, Mass' Rafe; maussuh* when used without the name, as "Da' muh maussah"; also *Maussuh Jedus*, but *Mastuh* for God alone. *Ox*, plural, "two ox"; *oxin*, singular, "one oxin." *Specify*, to make *good*, usually in the negative *cyan' specify*, can't make good; of a poor wife, "she cyan' specify"; of trousers, "de britchiz bus', 'e yent specify."

Quizzit, to ask, to question.

[535] *To shout*, not used of exclamation or outcry but of a peculiar religious dance[533] of the primitive Negro Christians

[539] Whoza, whoza, whozalor, da hombarnorta, sundundilly?
Coo me sormber norty sundundilly indelarun.
("De Tiger an' de Nyung Lady.")

Olawin! Olawin!
Odatic-tic-tic!
(De Wolf, de Rabbit an' de Whale's Eggs.)

[539] "Mass' Sam tell we ol' Maussa say, 'Sam' Mass' Henry bat-o home."
Bennett, H. 6.

[533] For an exposition of the "shout song" see Johnson, *The Book of American Negro Spirituals*, Preface, 32-35; and for a first-hand description see *Slave Songs of the United States*, XII-XV, taken from the N. Y. *Nation*, May 30, 1867.
Compare Dorothy Scarborough, *On the Trail of Negro Folk-Songs*, Harvard University Press, 1925, p. 269.

8: Smith Q-4,5 (no date) 1926
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[535]

marked by ecstatic motion and hysterical physical rhythms.

Too in the sense of "very."

Sometime, inconstant, unsure: "Dem nyoung gal is a sometime t'ing."

Nyam, in the sense of eat."

Lahgin', and *swongger*, to assume self importance, to put on airs. Both of these seem pure Negro, unless the first is from 'largin', enlarging (?); and the second from swagger, compare swank.

Mongkey-nut for cocoa-nut, probably from the resemblance of the hairy nut to a brown monkey's head.

Soon for early, as a *soon brukwuss*, a *soon staa't*, a *soon man*. Thence, as noted by Mr. Bennett,[11] arises the first division of the Negro's day; *soon er mo'nin'*; after which follows *fus' fowl-crowin'*, *day-clean*, *sun-up*, *fus' an' las' ho'n blowin'*, *fo'noon res'*, *attanoon*, *de sun duh lean*, *de sun duh lean fuh down*, *sun-down*, *deep-dus'*, *ebenin'*, *can'le-lightin'*, *night-time*, *platt-eye prowl*, and *hag-hollerin'*."[12]

Phrases

Crack 'e bret' (or *crack 'e teet'*), crack his breath or teeth, i.e., say something.

Long-mout', surly or contemptuous pushing out of lips.

Shut-mout' (adj.) or *tie up 'e mout'* (verb), secretive, ill-natured, not saying anything.

Onrabble 'e mout', unravel his mouth, i.e., loosen up in conversation.

W'ich en' w'y talk, which and why talk, i.e., contradictory, inconsistent talk.

She-she talk, used of feminine loquacity. This phrase looks, by the way, like a correct use of the feminine gender,

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[11] Mr. Williams' suggestion is that *nyam* comes from *yam tetter* (yam potato) with intrusive *n* before *y* sound. Williams, *De Ole Plantation*, *VI*. An improbable derivation. Professor W. A. Craigie derives it from African *nyam*—to eat: *n'yam*—food, and compares Portuguese African *iguame*—the yam.

[12] I, 342.

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[775]

[12] Midnight. Hags are witches, and platt-eyes diabolical spirits of the mist. *Loc cit.*, 342.

9: Parrish B-4,5 (ca.1916-1941) 1942
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175 voyage from which they never returned.[23] Ten years ago Katie told me that the
569 Sapelo Negroes never swept dirt out the door at night if they could help it. If they
822 did or were obliged to throw out water, it was important to say, "Move on, fr'en,"
954 or " 'Scuse me, brother." Otherwise they were in danger of offending some of their
715 kinfolk who might be passing by or "visitin' aroun'." On St. Simon's I was told if it
782 were necessary to sweep at night you must first throw out a live coal, to make sure you did not sweep away the spirit of some member of the family.

754 On Sapelo if a hag torments you at night you put a knife, or a Bible, under
789 your pillow. Glasgow says that a man he knows would cry out in his sleep and could get no peace until he tried this remedy.[24] Katie told me that when you had occasion
775 to speak of the dead, you made the sign of the cross on your forehead. At a funeral
788 on St. Simon's an old woman went to the fireplace and, with a sooty finger, made
789 the same sign on the forehead of a little child. The next day, when asked why she did this, she explained that it was to keep the spirit of the dead man from troubling the youngster.[25] Katie also told me that passing the child over the coffin to someone on the other side afforded the same immunity.

175 I have never been convinced that the reason given by our Negroes for holding
569 funerals at night was unimpeachably true. The answer I usually get, when I question
764 them, reflects on the generosity of the slave owner. It seems unlikely that any master as kindhearted as the one described by Susan Dabney Smedes, in *A Southern Planter*, would begrudge the time it took from the daily "tas' " for the funeral of a beloved slave. Night funerals were apparently an established custom in Virginia in 1835, the time the Dabneys left for Mississippi. Mrs. Smedes tells us that she remembers the death of Grannie Harriett, born in tide-water Virginia long before

[23] M. Andanson is quoted in Astley's Collection as saying that the "Bristol and Liverpool ships were the worst offenders." It is also reported by Miss Kingsley, in West African Travels, that red was a favorite color of the spirits ("spirits always like red") and the most frequent charm-case was of that color "to flatter and please" them.

[24] Miss Beckwith mentions the same inclination to ascribe supernatural powers to objects used in Christian religion: "hence a [Revivalist] preacher always held a Bible, although he might hold it upside down." On the coast of Georgia this custom is the rule, but it is from an unwillingness to admit illiteracy and to depart from a convention. But Miss Beckwith tells of other superstitions that are surprisingly similar to those found on our sea islands. They were in all likelihood carried to Jamaica by the slaves of the loyalists who settled there following the Revolutionary War.

[25] A curious instance of Catholic influence on an African superstition. Lampblack was used
(177) to darken coffins in the old days, and a finger rubbed on the coffin was as effective as one dabbed in soot.

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her master, Thomas Dabney, who was born in 1798. Grannie had been given to him by his mother with the words: "You can trust her in everything." When he went to Mississippi she went along with his other slaves, but apparently the journey was too hard, and Grannie died soon after their arrival. "The master himself led the funeral procession, and all his children followed the coffin as mourners. He ordered out the whole plantation, every one who could walk, and every man, woman, and child carried a torch. The sound of the funeral hymn and the blazing of the many torches, as we wound down the road to the dark shades of the burying-ground, made a painful impression on me as a child and caused many a secret tear." In her *Journal* Fanny Kemble describes another night funeral on Butler's Island, to which she reacted in a similar manner—except that she did not shed her tears in private.

In describing an African burial, Mungo Park mentions that the body is dressed in white cotton, wrapped in a mat, and then "carried to the grave in the dusk of the evening, by the relations." From this I am led to believe that the custom may have originated in Africa. Further evidence to support such a view is furnished by Monroe M. Work, who says, in an article in the *Southern Workman* (1907), that it was an old Hamarian practice to bury the dead in the dark. It may be that our Negroes carried out some such traditional observance when they threw their pine torches beside the grave and went back without them. We know the belief in spirits is strong, and it is possible that in this way the spirit of the dead man was prevented from following the living to their homes. Be that as it may, the pine torches were never removed, and the nearest I have come to an explanation of why they were left was given me by Katie Brown: They belonged to the dead. You must not take away a thing that is theirs. If, at the burial, a button falls to the ground from your dress, you must not pick it up. Bad luck follows you if you do.[28]

A nephew of Katie's gave me an instance of what happened to a Sapelo colored man he knows, who helped clean up the graveyard. After he had put the brush in piles to burn, he thriftily changed his mind and brought in his ox and cart to carry it away. Instead, he had to back his "team" into the fence and leave in a hurry when attacked by an immense dog—as big as a yearling calf—that had never before been

[28] *If you start to do something for the dead—whatever it is—you must carry it through. Laura never reached the grave of her son with the flowers she had apparently gathered for it, and in a few months she died in an asylum. The headstone carved out of the marble top of a wash-stand by young Aaron for his father's grave is still in the Cabin. He has been in serious trouble ever since he left it there.*

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seen on the island. Later he returned with three men to get his ox. This time the dog did not appear—but the cart went back empty.

In the Sapelo burying ground I have seen many evidences of the African custom of placing useful articles on the tops of graves. The Negroes generally say they are for ornamentation, but on Sapelo I was told that the alarm clocks—of which there were many—are for the purpose of waking the dead at Doomsday. At the Petersville graveyard, lamps and electric-light bulbs are as popular as cups and pitchers.

Work also tells us in the above-mentioned article that "Among the Zulus, pottery is broken by the widow over the grave," [27] and René Maran, in Batouala, speaks of the same custom, specifying that the dead man's pots are placed upon his clothing. With his easy chair on top of everything, he is prepared for living the life of the dead. The pictures that accompany an article on "Fetishism in Congo Land" [28] by E. J. Glave, one of Stanley's pioneer officers, give positive proof of the origin of the custom. One, portraying the grave of a Congo Chieftain, shows the same type of decoration that is in use among our Southern rural Negroes. In addition, the author gives a picture of a distorted "charm root" which explains the use of eccentric wood growths in the decoration of the Negro graveyard at Sunbury. Headstones like the cement work found in the Sunbury yard, are a modern innovation. Mungo Park tells us that he "never observed that any stone was placed over the grave, as a monument or memorial." The noticeable lack of interest displayed by our Negroes in providing any sort of marker for their dead, other than a couple of stakes which soon disappear, may be accounted for in this way.

The custom observed by the men, in walking apart from the women, to a baptism and to a "buryin'," is apparently based on an African tradition. Maran tells us: "It is not right to walk side by side. A custom as old as the Negro, dictated single file." To this day older members of the race walk single file—the men in front. In the old-time funeral processions the women and children followed the men. or else walked on the opposite side of the road—now they ride in automobiles. In many Negro churches, the men sit on the left side, the women on the right.[29]

[27] Our Southern Indians made holes in the bottom of the pots they put in graves, so that the spirit of the pot could accompany the spirit of the dead man to the other world.

[28] Century, April. 1891.

[29] In the Friends Meeting I attended in my youth. the women sat on the left side of the meeting-house and the men on the right.

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she was told and Henry said: "Now that is over." That night he died in his sleep.

However, not all premonitions materialize. I was told of an instance on Edisto Island, where a young girl was stricken and believed her last hour had come. Relations were summoned, and the usual rites were conducted. At the last moment, however, when she was expected to make a proper exit, she was overcome with a desire to eat. She clamored for food, and the watchers went home in disgust.

In the old days it was the custom to send messages by the dying to those who had gone before.[16] A friend told me how an ex-slave came to her house just before her father's funeral, and said he wanted to talk to "Marse Jim." She explained to the old man that her father had just died. He said: "I know it. I want to talk to him." Of course he was given permission. How one wishes the conversation could have been overheard!

On the out islands of the Bahamas, the custom of "settin'-up" with the dying is an event enjoyed by the one who is bound for the other world quite as much as by those who come for a last visit. The procedure is practically the same as on the mainland, as is to be expected, since the custom was carried from the States at the end of the Revolution by slaves of the loyalists from South Carolina and Georgia. An acquaintance who spent a winter on one of the Berry Islands gave an account of a "settin'-up" with which she was concerned. A neighboring colored woman, who was very old, decided it was time for her to die, and begged for a certain white dress in which to lie in state. She set the date of her death, and invited her friends from the adjoining islands to be with her on the momentous occasion. She looked very handsome, I was told, and all went well—but twenty-four hours passed, and she did not die. Another day went by, and she still clung to life. When nothing happened on the third day, the guests were obliged to return to their respective homes. In a couple of weeks, however, she sent for them again. This time luck was with her, and she departed according to schedule.

IN THAT OLD FIELD

Susyanna (Illustration 29)[A] learned this lonesome melody from her grandmother, who was a slave. Sung in a minor key, it is one to which the printed word and note can never do justice. It must be heard to be appreciated. "That old field" is the Negro name for a burying ground, and the slave, like his cousins in Africa, was quite as much concerned with the life to come as with that of the moment.

[16] As exemplified in the song: "Ride on, Conquering King," p. 183.

A. [For Illustration 29, see Category 142, plate facing p. 177--Analyst]

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RIDE ON CONQUERING KING

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As mentioned elsewhere, this is a good example of the question-and-answer type of song and was used at a "settin'-up" in accordance with the custom of sending messages by the dying to relations and friends in the other world.[18]

If you see my mother
Oh yes.
Won't you tell her for me
Oh yes.
I'm a ridin' my horse in the battle-field
I want a see my Jesus in the mornin'.

Chorus: Ride on King
Ride on King
Ride on Conquering King
I want a see my Jesus in the mornin'.

[18] All of them are named in lengthening the song.